The Pentagon's New Missions—and Old Methods

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Jerusalem's Gloomy Millennialists
Gershom Gorenberg

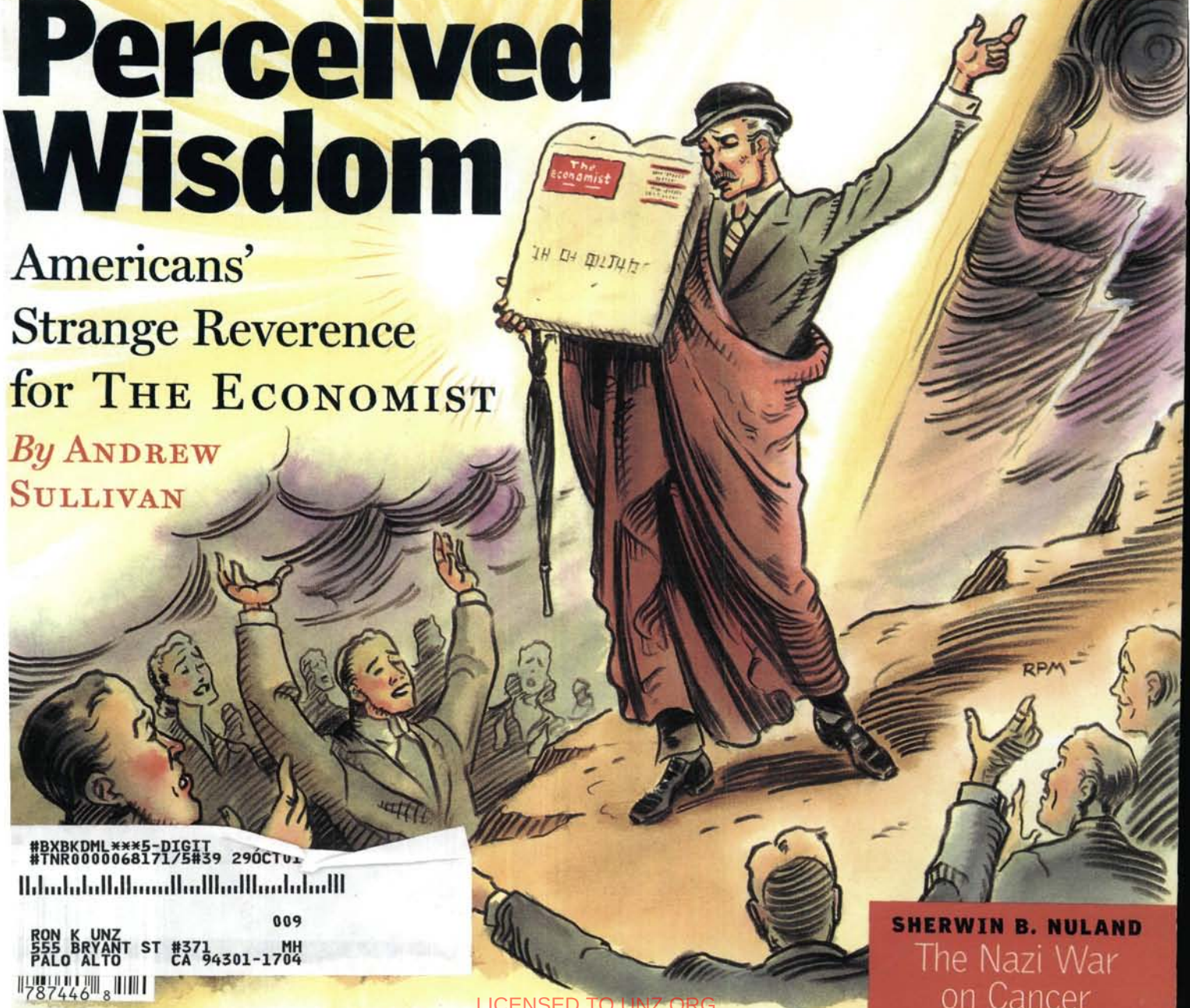
Tom Friedman's Rosy Planet
David S. Landes

June 14, 1999

Perceived Wisdom

Americans' Strange Reverence for The Economist

By Andrew Sullivan



SHERWIN B. NULAND
The Nazi War on Cancer

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts

WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 14, 1999
ISSUE 4,404

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Slobo's willing executioners, Presbyterianism's offshoots, &c.

6 **PETER BEINART** TRB: BILL OF GOODS Nobody noticed that the great new gun-control laws are attached to a lousy new bill.

8 **MICHELLE COTTLE** ON THE HILL: AMONG FRIENDS Democrats face a millennial quandary in choosing between the trial lawyers and Silicon Valley.

11 **THE EDITORS** BROKEN ENGAGEMENT The Cox report and the real China scandal.

12 **NOTEBOOK** Alternative therapy for Hillary, alternative uses for Apaches, &c.

13 **MATTHEW MILLER** HAPPY DAYS How computers made our economy modern—and our domestic policy agenda obsolete.

14 **AKHIL REED AMAR** LOST CLAUSE The Supreme Court has rediscovered part of the Fourteenth Amendment. Is it ready for the consequences?

16 **EMILY BACKUS** ALBANIA DISPATCH: RUNAWAYS The Kosovo refugee crisis spreads to the West.

18 **GERSHOM GORENBERG** TRIBULATIONS Evangelical Christians are flocking to Jerusalem to be on hand for the apocalypse. But will the apocalypse be one of their own making?

21 **ANDREW J. BACEVICH** COMBAT UNREADY During the past ten years, the United States has radically changed its national security policy. Too bad it didn't change its military structure.

25 **ANDREW SULLIVAN** LONDON FOG Americans' strange reverence for *The Economist.*

30 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: SPACED OUT Ten million fans *can* be wrong about *Star Wars, Episode 1: The Phantom Menace*; *Trekkies* is a weird, amusing look at the "Star Trek" subculture.

32 **JED PERL** ON ART: DREAM TEAM A group of artists is finding an unconventional magic in lumber, beeswax, and plastic grapes.

35 **SHERWIN B. NULAND** THE FINAL POLLUTION *The Nazi War on Cancer* by Robert N. Proctor

39 **DAVID S. LANDES** SHOW ME THE MONEY *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* by Thomas L. Friedman

41 **ADAM KIRSCH** A FORMAL FEELING *The Breakage* by Glyn Maxwell

44 **PETER BERKOWITZ** THE PEARL DIVER *The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social* by Hanna Fenichel Pitkin

48 **MARY JO SALTER** POEM *Kangaroo*

54 **JAMES GILBERT** WASHINGTON DIARIST: JUVENILIA

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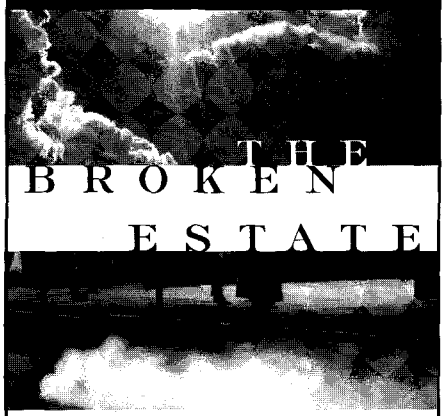
FROM AUSTEN TO UPDIKE, DELILLO TO WOOLF—
JAMES WOOD
EXPLORES THE LINK BETWEEN FAITH AND FICTION.



ESSAYS ON LITERATURE AND BELIEF
. . .
JAMES WOOD

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—Janet Malcolm

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Slobo's little helpers

TO THE EDITORS:
Stacy Sullivan's "Milosevic's Willing Executioners" took the words right out of my mouth (May 10). As the senior photographer in Europe for Atlantic News Service, having chronicled the breakup of Yugoslavia from Vukovar to Sarajevo, from Srebrenica to Pristina, and from the NATO bombardment of Belgrade to the refugee camps of Kukes, Albania, I long ago realized that the "problem" isn't solely Milosevic but the people of Serbia.

I have never seen Milosevic herd civilians into a ditch to be executed, and I have never met anyone in my 15 years of photographing the world's crisis zones who would jump off a bridge if told to do so by the political leadership.

MARK H. MILSTEIN
Atlantic News Service
Budapest, Hungary

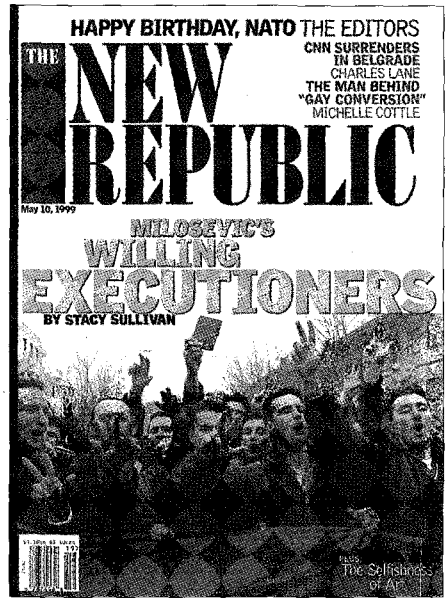
TO THE EDITORS:
I write to salute you for your general coverage of Kosovo, and especially Stacy Sullivan for writing the bravest and most cogent article hitherto published on the subject. "Milosevic's Willing Executioners" cut to a kernel at the core of the war and to a crucial issue of our time.

Sullivan correctly points out that analogies between the Third Reich and the Serbian project for a *Muslimfrei* Kosovo and Republika Srpska are inappropriate. This is a proper but standard piece of etiquette because of the Holocaust's many uniquenesses and singularities. But the echoes of the Reich have been loud enough in Milosevic's pogrom for years now, and that is why the language of your title is valid.

ED VULLIAMY
U.S. Bureau Chief
The Observer *(London)*
New York, New York

TO THE EDITORS:
I applaud Stacy Sullivan for telling it like it is in Yugoslavia. The sentiments expressed in her piece are nothing new for journalists. We discuss them on bar stools (in fact, Stacy and I have discussed them in smoky bars a few times), but rarely do we have the courage to put our thoughts into print. Perhaps we're afraid to editorialize. Maybe it's a fear of blowing our Serbian contacts. Whatever the concerns, Sullivan overcame them and presented an accurate analysis of a chaotic world we journalists continually fail to capture.

PETER KLEIN
Producer, "60 Minutes"
CBS
New York, New York



Nationalism and its discontents

TO THE EDITORS:
Ryan Lizza's discussion of the 1937 Cubrilovic memorandum on the need to expel Albanians from Kosovo is a little like expounding on the program of the Ku Klux Klan for dealing with blacks in the United States ("A Final Solution," May 10). No pre-World War II Yugoslav government took it seriously, but, even if one had, the coming of the war in 1939 would have ended it before any steps in that direction could have been taken. In any case, there were no mass deportations. And during that war it was the Serbs of Kosovo who suffered and not the Albanians, who at first allied themselves with Fascist Italy and subsequently Nazi Germany.

After the war, Tito's Communist regime made Kosovo an autonomous province. Tito proceeded on the assumption that autonomy plus economic assistance would make the Albanians loyal citizens of Yugoslavia, a forlorn hope as it turned out. And Vasa Cubrilovic, a critic of prewar governments, joined Tito. If he recommended what Lizza contends, Tito certainly rejected his advice. On the contrary, Tito's policies led to countless thousands of new immigrants from Albania, which in turn forced the Serbs to leave. A telling statistic is that, between 1961 and 1991, the percentage of Albanians in Kosovo rose from 67 to 82 percent, while the percentage of Serbs dropped from 27 to twelve percent.

The persecution of Serbs by the Albanians (desecration of churches and cemeteries, theft of livestock, burning of barns and haystacks, chopping down of fruit trees,

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seizure of properties, and assault of persons) increasingly caused the Yugoslav Communists to conclude that the party's policies were failing. In two frantic conclaves in 1987, which included Croats, Slovenes, and Muslims as well as Serbs, they even accused the Albanians of genocide. A year or so later, they threw the problem in Serbia's lap, amending the constitution so that Serbia could reduce Kosovo's autonomy. That Serbia did, reducing it but not revoking it, as the press keeps repeating. The Albanians refused to accept the changed status. They boycotted schools, medical clinics, and other state institutions and set up their own in homes, barns, and other buildings.

The more militant Albanians created the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army and began the killing of Serbian officials as well as Albanians associated with them. The rest is history.

ALEX N. DRAGNICH
Professor Emeritus
Vanderbilt University
Bowie, Maryland

TO THE EDITORS:
Ryan Lizza's "A Final Solution" compares me to Communist-era anti-Albanian historian Vasa Cubrilovic and presents me as his heir both in ideas and scholarly tradition. Although these claims are absurd, I find it necessary to explain this misinterpretation. My books and articles on Kosovo are being reprinted in French, English, German, and other Western languages and are respected, quoted, and commented on by scholars all over the world. Some journalists and biased quasi-scholars are trying to undermine the impact of my work by suggesting that I am a nationalist or a supporter of this or that cause. Actually, I am only a historian, widely quoted even by pro-Albanian writers like Miranda Vickers and Noel Malcolm, with whom I disagree on many issues. The points in my books are supported by valuable historical sources. To cite several of Lizza's misinterpretations, I will concentrate on two. First, my statement that most of the Communist-educated Kosovar Albanians are "semi-intellectuals capable of taking in only a limited number of ideas" is actually a summary of longer articles written by leading Kosovar Albanian independent intellectuals in different periods, first by Hasan Kaleshi in the 1970s and, second, by Shklzen Maliqi in the late '80s. Both were boycotted by the same kind of semi-intellectuals, and Kaleshi, an internationally recognized scholar of the social sciences, died under dubious circumstances, while Maliqi was boycotted for many years for being too liberal. The other example of Lizza's approach, by quoting Malcolm on the number of ethnic Albanian immigrants to Kosovo during World War II, fails to acknowledge the fact that Malcolm, as a self-proclaimed specialist for Kosovo, *never* used any sources from Serbian archives, where many firsthand documents related to this topic can be found. As for Vickers's statement that "the more educated the Serbs are, the more nationalist they become," this is exactly a kind of argument that Serbian ultra-nationalists were using to present Kosovar Albanians as a dangerous ethnic community that should be annihilated—a plan I always publicly condemned.

DUSAN T. BATAKOVIC
Belgrade, Yugoslavia

RYAN LIZZA REPLIES:
Dusan Batakovic's work, whether intentionally or not, has given Serb nationalism an intellectual imprimatur. In addition to his anti-Albanian history of Kosovo, Batakovic has written a celebratory interpretation of Ilija Garasanin's 1844 *Nacertanije*, the founding document of Serb nationalism, which calls on Serbia to conquer its neighbors. Batakovic finds *Nacertanije* "imbued with liberal ideas and principles."

continued on page 52

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Bill of Goods

DON'T GET ME wrong. I dislike the National Rifle Association as much as the next liberal, Northeastern, city-dwelling, deer sympathizer. I cheered last week as chief NRA lackey Larry Craig of Idaho, faced with a Democratic stampede on background checks at gun shows, ginned up one transparent Republican alternative after another, only to watch each one blow up in his party's face. By the evening of May 20, when the Senate passed a juvenile justice bill crammed with Democratic gun-control amendments, the NRA was in political free fall. And I, true to my demographic, felt that it couldn't have happened to a nicer bunch of guys.

But there is a problem. The media's verdict on the vote has been nearly unanimous: a big political win for the Democrats and a minor, typically Clintonian, policy improvement. Unfortunately, that's not true. The juvenile justice bill is not a minor policy improvement; it is a policy fiasco. Obsessed with the gun-control melodrama, the press has almost wholly ignored the real meat of the legislation: juvenile justice. Had it bothered to look, it would have seen that the Senate bill greatly extends two of the worst trends in contemporary law enforcement: the prosecution of juveniles as adults and the federalization of state crimes.

There is a reason America has a separate court system for juveniles: whatever you think about rehabilitation versus punishment, it's clear that a 14-year-old offender has a better chance of being diverted from a life of crime than a 30-year-old one. There are, of course, exceptions. And, to account for them, the law has traditionally allowed judges the right to try certain particularly heinous juveniles as adults. The idea is that you need a special reason to declare a kid unredeemable and that the decision should rest with a neutral party familiar with the particulars of the case. In recent years, however, state legislatures have increasingly stripped judges of that discretion—giving the choice to prosecutors or simply mandating that all kids of a certain age accused of a certain crime be tried as adults. In one celebrated case earlier this year, a gung-ho prosecutor in West Palm Beach, authorized by the state legislature to try juveniles as adults without judicial consent, tried to charge a 15-year-old mentally retarded boy as an adult for stealing two dollars from a classmate's pocket.

In an era of high-profile teen atrocities, trying lots of kids as adults makes politicians look tough on crime. But it flies in the face of social science. In 1996, four researchers at the University of Florida and the University of Central Florida published a study comparing 2,738 youth offenders who were tried as juveniles

with an equal number who were tried as adults. The samples were matched for severity of the crimes, age of the offenders, and other relevant factors. The data showed that the youths tried as adults were over 50 percent more likely to be arrested after release compared with those kept within the juvenile system. After all, they had spent their formative years in the company of hardened criminals.

Unfortunately, such evidence hasn't stopped the Senate from climbing on the bandwagon. The bill the Senate passed last week would allow U.S. attorneys to try teens ages 14 and up as adults whenever they are accused of "serious violent felonies or serious drug offenses." A nonbinding "sense of the Congress" clause even urges the states, in certain cases, to try kids as young as ten as adults.

Sending ten-year-olds to adult jails: That's what 42 of 45 Senate Democrats voted for last week while congratulating themselves for outfoxing the GOP on guns. The ACLU's Rachel King, who lobbied against the measure, suspects that, aside from gun control, many Democrats didn't even know what was in the bill.

So much for the party of due process. What about the party of states' rights? In recent months, tried-and-true conservatives William Rehnquist and Ed Meese have blasted Congress for literally making a federal case out of so many crimes. Angling for political advantage after every front-page atrocity, Congress has over the past several years duplicated many state laws. The result is a federal court system clogged with trials that should be handled by states and localities, and long delays in the civil cases that only the feds can actually handle. As the chief justice wrote in January: "The pressure in Congress to appear responsive to every highly publicized societal ill or sensational crime needs to be balanced with an inquiry into . . . whether we want most of our legal relationships decided at the national rather than the local level. Federal courts were not created to adjudicate local crimes, no matter how sensational or heinous the crimes may be."

You would think conservatives would want to empower local prosecutors and judges, who presumably understand their communities better than guys shipped in from the Justice Department. You would be wrong. The Senate bill, sponsored by Utah's Orrin Hatch, gives U.S. attorneys broad power to take over juvenile prosecutions, even over local objections. And it creates a host of new federal drug and gang laws, thus exacerbating the very duplication problem that Rehnquist bemoaned.

Yet, with laudable exceptions like Tennessee's Fred Thompson and Ohio's George Voinovich, the GOP didn't raise a peep about local control. All in all, 31 of the Senate's 55 Republicans supported the juvenile justice bill. The party that doesn't want Washington bureaucrats to educate your children or run your welfare programs seems more than willing to let them prosecute your criminals—as long as it makes Republicans look tough on crime and helps get gun control off the political agenda.

Since Littleton, politicians and pundits of all stripes have generally agreed that guns are only a small part of the debate about youth crime. They've said they want to focus on other issues as well; they want to look seriously at a multifaceted approach to the problem; and they don't want to use Littleton merely to score points for or against the NRA. After last week, it's getting harder to believe them.

PETER BEINART

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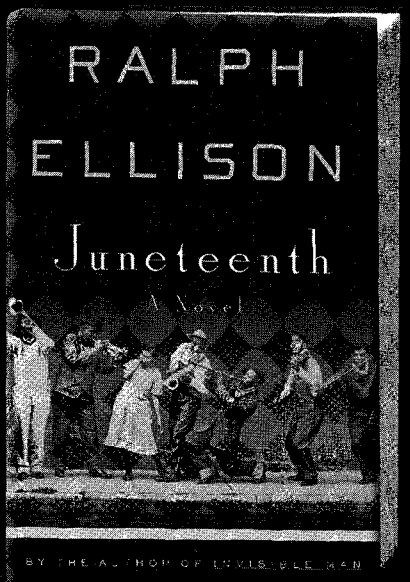
The new novel from the author of *Invisible Man*

Photo: © Bob Adelman

"Ralph Ellison's generosity, humor, and nimble language are on display in *Juneteenth*, but it is his vigorous intellect that rules the novel. A majestic narrative concept."

—Toni Morrison



At once a jazz novel, a lament of pain, a declaration of need, and a journey toward truth—here, finally, from the award-winning writer, is the master work that readers and critics have been eagerly anticipating for over 40 years.

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ON THE HILL

Among Friends

THERE'S A LITTLE ditty my Brownie troop used to sing at the close of every meeting: *Make new friends,/but keep the old./One is silver,/and the other's gold.*

It's a sweet piece of advice—but one not always easily followed. Just ask Senate Democrats. For weeks now, they've been in a cold sweat over a troublesome Y2K liability bill that Republicans are hawking. The legislation, which would limit companies' liability for damages caused by Y2K computer failures, effectively pits the Democrats' new friends—the high-tech industry—against some of their old ones—the trial lawyers. Both constituencies have deep, deep pockets positively bulging with silver and gold—which is, after all, what makes them such dear friends.

The Republican Party, accustomed to being the friend of choice for wealthy business types, is understandably jealous of the attention the high-tech community has been paying Democrats. Thus, it's no surprise that the GOP has latched on to the Y2K liability issue as a way to sow dissension in the Democratic ranks, while driving a trial-lawyer-shaped wedge between the Democrats and Silicon Valley.

So far, it's working. In one camp sits Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon, a noted technophile, who agreed to cosponsor Y2K legislation introduced by Republican Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain. The bill, which reads like a Silicon Valley wish list, would cap punitive damages from Y2K lawsuits; assess liability on a proportional basis, meaning a defendant would be responsible only for the portion of damages corresponding to the defendant's percentage of responsibility; require potential plaintiffs to give a defendant 90 days to submit a corrective plan before legal action is taken; and shift class-action suits from state to federal courts in an attempt to rationalize the process (and divert cases away from state courts, which might be more favorable to plaintiffs' attorneys).

Since that bill is deemed too extreme to pass, there's already a compromise on the table from Connecticut Senator Chris Dodd. Dodd would throw the trial lawyers a bone in the form of an amendment that would, among other modifications, lower the burden of proof required in some cases and weaken the legal protection for company officers and directors. Both McCain and Wyden have signed on to Dodd's changes, as has the high-tech community. Even the Chamber of Commerce—the most intransigent member of the pro-business coalition—has come aboard, albeit grudgingly.

Although the motives of these Democrats might not be entirely pure, the impulse is sound. Without question, companies that willfully neglect the Y2K problem until the eleventh hour should be held accountable for resulting damages. But, especially in light of the deep pockets of many high-tech players—and the increasingly tort-happy nature of our society—the situation is ripe for exploitation. By some estimates, the price tag for Y2K litigation could run as high as $1 trillion. Those numbers may be inflated, but, clearly, some attempt to moderate the coming litigation tsunami is in order.

Alas, the trial lawyers are hanging tough—and they still have their champions. Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, for one, is pushing a proposal that would provide defendants with only the slimmest of shields. The proposal would effectively remove caps on punitive damages and would limit liability protection to business-to-business (or government) litigation; consumer lawsuits—including class-action suits—would remain exempt. The high-tech industry (not to mention the Chamber of Commerce) has publicly rejected Kerry's proposal: "It guts the bill from the point of view of the tech community," one lobbyist explains.

Then there's South Carolina Senator Fritz Hollings, who opposes federal legislation altogether. He would leave the whole messy business to the individual states—many of which might opt to do nothing. Not too many Democrats have taken as strong a stand as Hollings, but so far he has succeeded in filibustering McCain-Wyden, thus keeping the legislation off the floor.

These days, the squabbling among the Democratic factions comes closer to low comedy than high drama. The Kerry camp accuses Dodd of "waving candy around," promising the pro-business coalition protections that amount to "veto bait." Dodd sympathizers ridicule Kerry for flogging a bill only a trial lawyer could love. Hollings has taken potshots at Dodd, accusing him of pandering to insurance interests in Connecticut, while other Democrats dismiss Hollings as a puppet of the trial lawyers. (For the record: Both Hollings and Kerry received more than $1 million in campaign contributions from lawyers between 1993 and 1998.) Wyden, meanwhile, is in the doghouse with some of his Commerce Committee colleagues—especially Hollings—for joining forces with McCain. One Hill staffer has noted that Wyden now has "a bull's-eye on his back, and it will be there as long as he is in the Senate." And pretty much everyone—according to everyone else—is guilty of "playing politics."

Naturally, this internecine bickering suits the GOP just fine. With Democrats busy slapping each other, Republicans are engaged in what one Democratic aide termed "a full-court pander" to Silicon Valley. In late April, through a procedural sleight of hand, Majority Leader Trent Lott put Democrats in a position where they were compelled to vote en masse against ending Hollings's filibuster—giving the Republican Senatorial Committee fodder for a subsequent fund-raising missive titled: "DEMOCRATS SPIKE Y2K LIABILITY BILL." In it, Chairman Mitch McConnell crowed: "This vote blows the cover on the Democrats' con game with Silicon Valley. The Democrats show up with their laptops and throw around some buzzwords, and they've completely hoodwinked the industry into believing they actually care about high-tech. Today, every Senate Democrat voted for mega-lawsuits, not microchips."

That's not exactly true—Democrats were voting more in protest of Lott's procedural shenanigans than in support of Hollings's position—but those kind of charges will start to stick if Democrats insist on dragging this issue out. Recent momentum suggests that passage of some variation on the McCain-Wyden-Dodd plan is inevitable; Senate Democrats should reconcile themselves to that fact, get Hollings off the floor, start debate on Dodd's plan (and Kerry's, if it makes everyone feel better), then work with the House on getting a final product to the president. The longer this matter kicks around the Capitol, the more room Republicans have to play politics, and the more pathetic Democrats look. Particularly on time-sensitive legislation, it's a bad idea to posture for too long, lest voters realize just how much a few wealthy friends dictate the congressional conscience. Surely, even the trial lawyers can appreciate the virtue of that.

MICHELLE COTTLE

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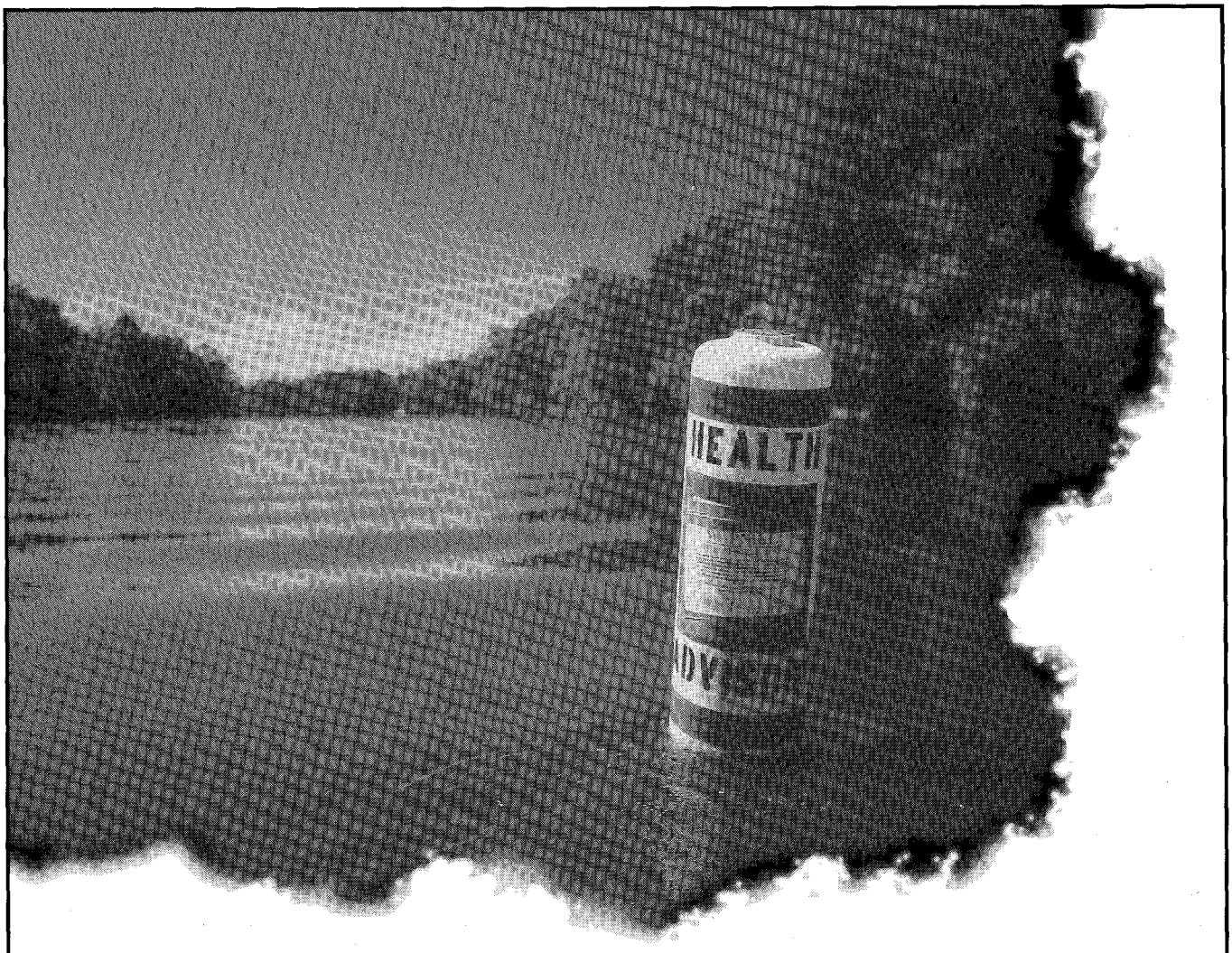

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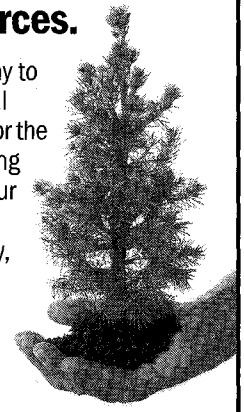

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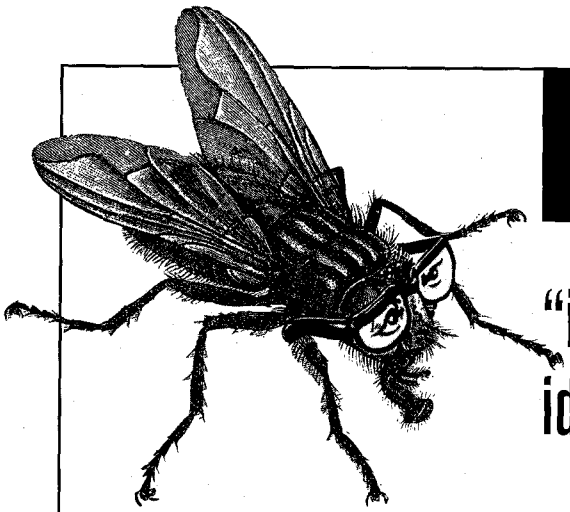

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Broken Engagement

THE RELEASE THIS WEEK of the long-awaited, thoroughly vetted Cox report on Chinese nuclear espionage immediately provoked Republicans and reporters into a fresh search for scandal.

Who knew what, and when? And scandal will surely abound. President Clinton is already responding to questions about the accountability of his office with the sort of casuistic circumlocutions that haven't been heard since the heyday of the Starr inquiry. It is by now an established rule for getting to the bottom of a Clinton imbroglio: follow the doubletalk.

But the what-did-who-know-when scandal is not the real scandal that has been exposed by the Cox report. The real scandal is the cognitive dissonance upon which the administration is building its China policy. The information that we are now acquiring—from the Cox report, from Beijing's astonishing response to the accidental destruction of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade—about the true nature of the Chinese "engagement" with the United States is troubling enough; but the refusal of the administration to attach this information to its own "engagement" with China is shocking. A complete severance of policy from knowledge has occurred. The power of inference has broken down in the West Wing. The unhappy news about China goes in one door, and the happy policy toward China comes out the other door.

The implication of the Cox report could not be clearer: while the Clinton administration seeks to create a "strategic partnership" with China, China has targeted the United States as its enemy. These three black glossy volumes amount to a devastating case against the premises and the particulars of Bill Clinton and Sandy Berger's morally complacent, strategically shallow, and economically intoxicated policy of cozying up to China, no matter how unpartnerly it acts.

Money, money, money: Once Clinton took office in 1993, he gave Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown carte blanche to sweep away the remaining barriers to trade with China, pushing for the sale of computers and other high technology. Indeed, for all the focus on Chinese gains at American scientific laboratories, one of the most disturbing sections of the Cox report focuses precisely on the Chinese acquisition, licit and illicit, of American high technology. It began with the Bush administration's approval of Loral's and Hughes's requests to launch satellite technology on Chinese Long March missiles. The Clinton administration continued these approvals—to the extent that it okayed 19 launches. According to the Cox commission, whose formation was prompted by revelations of Loral's and Hughes's sloppy oversight of their launches in China, the companies showed the PRC how to improve the design and reliability of the guidance system used in the latest Long March rocket. In addition, "Loral and Hughes acted without the legally required license, although both corporations knew that a license was required."

The fact is that better oversight of American companies, while desirable in theory, might not be enough. Why are they launching any satellites on Chinese rockets in the first place? The Clinton administration may believe, or pretend to believe, that sharp distinctions can be drawn between the civilian use and military use of technology, but the Chinese themselves do not. Quite the contrary. General Liu Huaqing, a member of the Politburo, put the matter with admirable clarity in 1992, when he proclaimed that economic modernization is dependent on "advanced science and technology" and "people armed with it." Anything else is simply "empty talk."

How has China translated its own words into action? The PRC follows a 16-Character Policy that, as the Cox report notes, has been codified by the central committee. This policy deliberately blurs the lines between state and commercial entities and military and commercial interests. In addition, China has established more than 3,000 front corporations in the United States, some for espionage. These are not isolated episodes but are part of a coherent strategy aimed at finding a way to use the American industrial base to build up the Chinese military. The truth is that in a Communist state such as China, where the party remains firmly in control, there can be no real distinction between the private and public sectors. And this truth makes a shambles of the Clinton administration's "post-Communist" mercantilism.

The Cox report is filled with evidence of such elisions. Did Sandy Berger inform the president in 1998 of espionage attempts? Yes, he originally told the Cox committee. Then, this past May, as part of the declassification process, Berger said, oops, the president had actually been briefed in July 1997, though no written record of the meeting exists. But Clinton, in a March press conference, claimed that he had not been briefed on Chinese espionage—"to the best of my

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knowledge." And the list of Clinton evasions and qualifications and tergiversations can be multiplied.

But the devil in this instance is not only in the details. The Cox report paints a big picture, too. It unforgettably depicts a very different China from the one depicted by the Panglossian, trade-lawyering Sandy Berger and his boss. China may not be a new Soviet Union, but the Soviet Union is not the only moral and strategic foe that the United States will ever face. Indeed, totalitarianism in China is a great experiment in proving that economic liberalization does not require political liberalization—a great experiment in disproving, in other words, the administration's monomaniacally capitalist view that the rising tide will lift all boats. The tide is rising, but most of the boats are still low. Commerce—the very sphere that the Clinton administration claimed would convert China into a democracy—has turned out to have had the opposite effect. The faster the United States trades with China, the more emboldened China becomes strategically and militarily. One wonders, sometimes, how Sandy Berger can still show his face. ■

NOTEBOOK

ANGER MANAGEMENT: In a recent interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour, Hillary Rodham Clinton was asked if she has been able to forgive her wayward husband. Waxing philosophic about how "one always has to be ready to forgive if one wants to go on and live without bitterness and hope," Clinton drew a loose parallel between her recent troubles and the ongoing crisis in the Balkans: "I think how we live our lives and how we deal with whatever life throws our way is played out on our own individual stage. And then, if you look at the life of someone like Milosevic and his wife, it can be played out on the national stage.... We are seeing their psychological anguish and bitterness acted out in their incredible hatred of those who are different from them. So I think that, in everyday ways, how you treat your own disappointments and whether you're able to forgive the pain that others cause you and, frankly, to acknowledge the pain you cause to others, it's one of the big challenges we face as we move into this next century. And it's something that I certainly have faced." Does that mean we're lucky Hillary is merely pondering a run for the Senate—and not a campaign of ethnic cleansing?

DUAL-USE TECHNOLOGY: It's been almost ten weeks since NATO Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark first asked for Apache helicopters to use against Serbian forces in Kosovo. But, though the Apaches have finally arrived in Albania, the Pentagon is still dithering over whether to actually use them in battle. Herewith, some alternative sorties while the helicopter gunships await further orders:

10. **Loom menacingly near the Kosovo border.**
9. **Conduct ecotours of remote Albanian mountain flora.**
8. **Assist local farmers with crop dusting.**
7. **Provide up-to-the-minute traffic reports for Tirana.**
6. **Fly ad banners past sunbathers on the Adriatic's beaches.**
5. **Entertain the kids at refugee camps with stunt-flying.**
4. **Herd sheep.**
3. **Ferry celebrity visitors from the camps to idyllic island getaways.**
2. **Carry heli-skiers to the Italian Alps.**
1. **Fight fires without fire.**

SECOND THOUGHTS FOR HARRY AND LOUISE? The Health Insurance Association of America, which played a decisive role in defeating the 1994 Clinton health care plan, has taken up a noble new cause: "Every American ought to be concerned that more than 43 million people lack health insurance," Leonard D. Schaeffer, HIAA's chairman, told *The New York Times* on May 23, as part of a national publicity blitz. Then he unveiled a $60 billion proposal in which the government would give poor people insurance vouchers, offer tax credits to businesses that cover employees, and cut back on regulations that—according to the industry—make premiums so expensive. HIAA is right that the swelling ranks of the uninsured represent a genuine crisis and that throwing government money at the problem will help. Still, it's hard to take the HIAA's pang of social conscience at face value. After all, a big reason that insurance is unaffordable to so many low- and middle-income workers is that these people represent a higher-risk population that tends to run up bigger medical bills—and the HIAA's member companies, therefore, charge them exorbitant fees. The only cure for this problem is to spread risk across the entire population through something called "community rating"—the key element of universal coverage that would force insurance companies to charge all comers the same rate, thus preventing them from skimming the healthiest (that is, the most lucrative) customers from the population. If the HIAA were serious about giving everybody coverage, it would drop its longstanding opposition to community rating. That would mean forgoing some profits, but surely the group could live with that, particularly since the end result of that plan would mean literally millions more customers—not to mention addressing the moral crisis even it now concedes is so compelling.

GLOBAL WARMING, HOT AIR: During the 1997 Kyoto global warming summit, when the United States proposed binding but moderate greenhouse-gas controls, European Union nations piously played greener-than-thou, denouncing Washington and vowing they would adopt even stricter reductions. For this, they were warmly praised by the American press corps. A similar scenario took place during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. But, 84 months after Rio and 18 months after Kyoto, the European Union has yet to enact any meaningful reduction measures; currently, its ministers are boldly debating whether to table the issue until next fall. Of course, there's been no mention of this in the same press quarters that praised the Euros before. The cameras panned to other stories long ago. ■

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Our new economic nirvana.

Happy Days

By MATTHEW MILLER

ON APRIL 15, a phalanx of the nation's top economists settled into chairs on one side of the 27-foot-long, two-ton mahogany-and-granite conference table in the Federal Reserve's majestic boardroom in Washington, D.C. Across from them, like negotiating opponents, were the six Fed governors, led by Chairman Alan Greenspan. Behind them, in the "bleachers," sat 50 Fed staffers and other invited observers. Greenspan had summoned the group for a high-level seminar on an arcane but essential question: Have computers percolated through the business world in ways that lift the average worker's productivity, and thus the economy's long-run prospects?

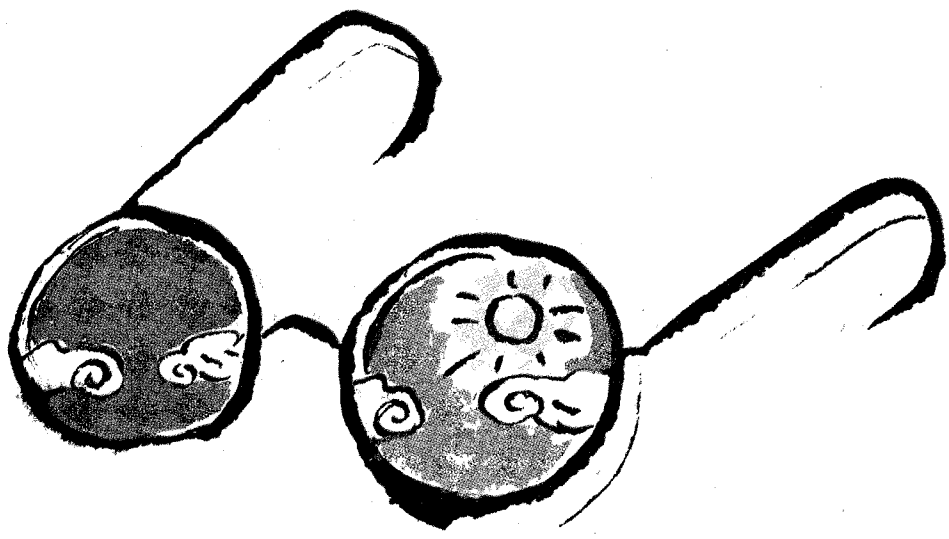
The answer was a tentative "yes," and it may soon make every big Washington policy debate obsolete. Several years ago, when seers of "the new economy" proclaimed the end of old speed limits on growth and inflation, economists were skeptical. "You can see the computer age everywhere but in the productivity statistics," ran the famous quip by Robert M. Solow of MIT. In other words, all those neat Compaqs and Apples weren't fundamentally changing the nature of work.

Now, though, it was clear that the climate of opinion had changed. Forecasts had been off for three years: output and employment had been stronger, and inflation weaker, than the old models would have predicted. Growth in productivity (or output per worker), which had stagnated around one percent yearly between 1973 and 1995, had jumped to three percent in the last year and to a stunning four percent rate in recent months. Remarkably, this surge was coming after eight years of expansion, a time when you'd expect diminishing returns as less-skilled workers entered the labor force. Within days, Greenspan began peppering his speeches with what, for a Fed chairman, passes for heady romanticism. His "hypothesis": A computer-led hike in productivity growth explained the good news.

A few lean years could prove this was all a blip, of course. But, if Greenspan is right, we're headed toward a brave old world. Productivity growth is the key to our standard of living. When output per worker rises, wages can rise in tandem without putting upward pressure on inflation. In the glory days, from the late '40s to 1973, productivity grew at three percent a year, doubling incomes over a generation. Since then, for most workers, they've stagnated; only the best and brightest have reaped the gains of the information age. What Greenspan and some of his colleagues now sense is that computers may have reached a critical mass in which they finally deliver more for everyone.

Economists have been dubious about this notion for reasons less practical than mathematical. For one thing, arcane measurement errors (recently corrected) help explain a portion of the good news, meaning we were always a bit more productive than we'd thought. But to believe that computers have done the rest, skeptics argue, you'd have to believe that economy-wide investment in computers has produced something like 50 cents a year for every dollar invested, a phenomenal rate of return. In addition, the number of workers using computers (and earning wage premiums) has risen from one in four in 1984 to one in two today; this increase can't account for more than a fraction of recent overall productivity gains. Seen through the prism of these benchmarks, the computer "revolution" has been a mix of hype and overkill: plopping more powerful computers each year in front of folks with the same-size brains hasn't really changed much. Just wait, skeptics say—you'll see the numbers settle down and find the whole "new economy" thing was a hoax.

BUT ANOTHER STORY seems increasingly plausible. As MIT's Erik Brynjolfsson—who, unlike many economists, spends a lot of time studying real businesses—argues, skeptics don't take into account the overhaul in business processes that computers eventually spark. Checkout scanners have enabled the Wal-Marts of the world to rethink their entire supply chain, resulting in leaner inventories, fewer middlemen, and faster response to changing tastes. Manufacturers can build cost-effective flexibility into their plants, bringing such previously unimaginable delights as designer-color Band-Aids and subspecies of iced tea. Banks micro-segment credit card markets to give folks with big balances and good payment records better rates. Overall, such trends allow higher sales or output to be supported with lower levels of capital and labor. By creating fresh value for customers



ROBERT NEUBECKER

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through service, variety, and convenience, they also raise returns on investment. The result is a real gain in efficiency and productivity.

In the past, economists downplayed this effect because they viewed investments in computer hardware only as "assets." But hardware represents just a fraction of any firm's technology spending. The bulk goes for software and training, plus efforts to redesign what firms actually do to profitably use their new information. If these essential costs (which make it possible to turn computers into wealth) are recast as "assets," Brynjolfsson reckons, the economy has an extra $1.3 trillion in unmeasured capital at work. At reasonable rates of return, this could boost productivity enough to solve the skeptics' conundrum.

The upshot is that the pattern of previous technological breakthroughs may be witnessing a sequel. The electric motor, for example, was introduced in the 1880s, but it took until the 1920s for firms to reorganize work around the assembly lines that made productivity surge. Ironically, computers are sparking the next great leap forward by enabling a shift away from mass assembly toward more flexible production and customization.

WITH THE CENTER of gravity among even cautious analysts shifting, and with two consecutive quarters of stunning four percent productivity growth under our belts, it's time to ask the question out loud: What does it mean for public policy if productivity growth is back in the low twos—or higher?

Social Security. For starters, there is no Social Security problem—at least none that requires immediate action. Higher productivity means faster growth, which increases the size of the pie from which the boomers' golden years will be funded. Today, the program's official deficit is roughly two percent of payroll—but that assumes productivity will grow 1.3 percent in each of the next 75 years (versus 2.1 percent in the past 75). A one percent boost would halve Social Security's funding gap, meaning that talk of private accounts, stock market investments, means-testing, and retirement-age hikes could be premature, if not unnecessary. Take it from a Social Security worrywart: since the scale of the problem could change radically depending on where productivity trends settle out, it's prudent to wait a few years. Since there likely won't be a deal in Clinton's waning days, Washington might as well make a virtue of necessity and procrastinate this time on principle.

Wages. No need to seduce the suburbs with an extra hour of family leave and a fresh penny for day care. If productivity growth is back, real wage growth is, too. While it could take a decade for many workers to regain what was lost in the '80s, soon it might be easier for couples to keep one parent home with the kids. Yes, this brings up the endless "necessities versus luxuries" debate, and women fulfilled by work will rightly never turn back. But both parents in millions of lower-income families have had no choice but to work, even when they'd prefer not to. If you're up for a reasonably priced town and good public universities, the '50s may rise again.

Budget. Here things get giddy. The Congressional Budget Office already projects a $381 billion surplus in 2009. If productivity grows a point a year faster, that figure doubles. That means guns *and* butter: ballistic missile defense, universal health coverage, hefty tax cuts, *and* a Marshall Plan for Kosovo. In the near term, the case for scrapping the spending caps Republicans are pretending to live with is already a no-brainer; if the productivity story is even half true, such deficit-era limits are ludicrous. Such is the beauty of bounty.

Stock market. Maybe it's not a bubble after all! Say someone invented a way to run cars on water, not oil. Where would this surge in productivity (through which the same output could be had at a fraction of the price) show up first? In stocks, of course. Then it would ripple through the market. Maybe it's the same with the Internet revolution.

Is rising productivity entirely good news? Alas, no. During his first two years in office, President Clinton was a notoriously unproductive chief executive, with a crazy schedule of back-to-back meetings twelve hours a day. Then, in early 1995, just as productivity was picking up across the economy, Clinton got the efficiency bug, too. Then-Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles revamped Clinton's schedule to give him four hours of "phone and office time" each day, to read, think, make decisions, or simply catch his breath. It's the one untold story of impeachment: without that productivity boost, Clinton never would have had time for Monica Lewinsky. ■

MATTHEW MILLER, a syndicated columnist, is an L.A.-based senior fellow at the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pensylvania.

The Court rediscovers part of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Lost Clause

By AKHIL REED AMAR

IN AN OTHERWISE routine opinion handed down on May 17, the Supreme Court rediscovered an old constitutional clause—and opened a new chapter in constitutional law. In the case, *Saenz* v. *Roe*, a seven-to-two majority struck down a California law awarding lower welfare benefits to certain newcomers. What made the decision remarkable was its rationale: the Court squarely relied upon the privileges or immunities clause of the Fourteenth Amendment—a 130-year-old provision that the Court had used only once before, in an obscure 1935 case that the Court later overruled. Although *Saenz* alarmed dissenters William Rehnquist and Clarence Thomas, there was, in fact, good reason to resurrect the clause. But, now that it's back, it could have far-reaching implications for other areas of the law. And it remains to be seen whether the Court is fully prepared for what it has unleashed.

Let's begin with the facts of *Saenz*. California's welfare

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package ranks sixth among the states in terms of absolute dollars and eighteenth if one adjusts for cost of living. Fearing it would become a welfare magnet, California adopted a rule treating newcomers differently from old-timers. If a citizen of a low-benefit state moved to California with the intent to reside there, the law said, she would not receive California's standard welfare package during her first year. Instead, California would give her the same amount of money that she *would have* received in her (low-benefit) state of origin.

In rejecting this law, the Court had to go beyond the two closest precedents, *Shapiro* v. *Thompson* (1969) and *Zobel* v. *Williams* (1982), because each was distinguishable in key respects. In *Shapiro,* states had denied new residents all welfare benefits entirely for their first year; California, by contrast, had more precisely tailored its benefits to track those of each newcomer's state of origin. In *Zobel,* Alaska had tried to entrench permanent distinctions among longtime residents, returning a greater share of its oil money to those Alaskans who had lived there longer (or were born there earlier). California, on the other hand, was restricting benefits only during a newcomer's first twelve months. And California, unlike Alaska, had explicit congressional authorization for its action, thanks to the omnibus 1996 welfare reform law.

More generally, in both *Shapiro* and *Zobel* the Court relied on a constitutional "right to travel." But, as the *Saenz* Court noted, this right has no explicit textual basis in the Constitution. And, as an inference from the Constitution's overall structure, the concept of "travel" seems slightly inapt when a person from state X is seeking not merely to visit or pass through state Y but rather to reside there indefinitely.

The bigger question, though, was whether maintaining somebody's welfare payments at a preexisting level for a year is really a "penalty" on interstate movement. After all, had the welfare recipient stayed in state X, she would have received nothing more. To rule the law unconstitutional would be to assert that a citizen of state X has an absolute right not merely to move to state Y but to be treated on equal terms with longtime citizens of Y from the get-go.

AND THIS IS precisely what the *Saenz* Court did, by resurrecting some language of the Fourteenth Amendment. The first sentence of that amendment, the Court announced, gave every American a federal constitutional right to immediate citizenship in any state: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are *citizens* of the United States *and of the State wherein they reside.*" The amendment's second sentence, said the Court, prohibited a state from discriminating against newcomers: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States."

Read in isolation, this clause might seem unclear on this point, but the Court noted that its words must be read in the light of an earlier provision of the Constitution, in Article IV, that also speaks of "privileges" and "immunities" of "citizens" which each "State" must respect: "The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States." Article IV has long been understood to prohibit a state from discriminating against visitors from sister states. What Article IV did for visitors, the Fourteenth Amendment did for new residents, explained the Court. Thus, Article IV bars a state from penalizing *current* citizens of sister states, and the interlocking language of the Fourteenth Amendment bars a state from penalizing *former* citizens of sister states.

It is an elegant argument, attentive to the ways in which word patterns recur in different and often dispersed clauses of the Constitution to create larger structures of meaning. And, although the Court only briefly alluded to the "original intent" of the Fourteenth Amendment, we should remember that the Northern Republicans drafting this grand language meant not merely to provide for the rights of blacks and loyal white Unionists in the South but also to enable Northerners to relocate to Southern states free from discrimination against "Yankees" and "carpetbaggers."

BUT, IF THE Court means to be honest about its new discovery, it must go further. The privileges or immunities clause was central to America's new birth of freedom after the Civil War, but the Reconstruction Court strangled the clause in its crib, in the notorious 1873 *Slaughterhouse Cases* (involving a challenge to a local zoning law regulating butchers). Although the *Saenz* majority quoted from the dissent in *Slaughterhouse*, it also quoted from the majority opinion, which read the clause in a ridiculously narrow way. (In effect, the key clause meant almost nothing, said the Court.) Virtually every constitutional scholar—left, right, and center—who has studied the matter in any detail has concluded that what the *Slaughterhouse* majority said cannot pass the straight-face test. If the Court means to revive the clause in any intellectually defensible way, it must kill *Slaughterhouse* once and for all.

Properly construed, the key clause of the Fourteenth Amendment goes beyond the principle of antidiscrimination; it also has a more absolutist, fundamental rights core. The language that *no state shall make a law* that *abridges* various privileges and immunities echoes not just Article IV, but also Amendment I: Congress *shall make no law abridging* freedom of speech. Historically, the Reconstruction Republicans clearly meant to prohibit Southern gag laws that "nondiscriminatorily" barred all citizens—black and white, new and old, Northern and Southern—from criticizing racism. More generally, the clause aimed to affirm that no state could deny its citizens *any* fundamental right or freedom, privilege or immunity.

This opens up a huge can of worms: How, after all, are judges to decide which "privileges" and "immunities" are that fundamental? Following *Saenz*'s methodological lead of construing scattered clauses as part of a single document, the first place to look is elsewhere in the Constitution. Where other parts of the Constitution declare certain rights and freedoms—like freedom of speech and religion, or the right to habeas corpus and jury trial—these rights are indeed fundamental privileges that no state should abridge.

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This is the basic idea underlying the so-called "incorporation" of the Bill of Rights against the states.

To be sure, the Court has already recognized such a principle under the aegis of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause. But this has always been a bad fit. Due *process* is about fair courtroom procedures, whereas privileges like free speech and religious exercise are about substantive rights outside of court. And due process for "persons" allowed the Court to craft plutocratic rules protecting corporations, which are treated as artificial "persons" in law. By contrast, the interlocking "citizenship" language of both Article IV and the Fourteenth Amendment is about real-life human beings who are "born" or "naturalized." Thus, any shift in judicial attention away from the due process clause and toward the privileges or immunities clause would be a welcome one.

In those cases where the rest of the Constitution is silent about an arguable right, courts should allow Congress to help define the fundamental privileges and immunities of American citizenship. This is precisely why the Reconstruction Congress drafted such broad language about privileges in the first place, and went on, in Section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment, to give Congress sweeping power to "enforce" these privileges.

HERE, THOUGH, IS where the Rehnquist Court may have to do some serious rethinking. So far, it has been highly selective in its use of Reconstruction text and history. In the 1997 *City of Boerne* v. *Flores* case, involving a challenge to a congressional statute seeking to protect religious freedom, the Court denied that Section 5 gave Congress a broad role. This argument ignored both history and precedent: earlier Courts had recognized broad congressional power under Section 2 of the Thirteenth Amendment, which is almost identically worded to Section 5 of the Fourteenth.

And in *Saenz* itself the Court was also too dismissive of Congress. Recall that Congress had explicitly blessed the California scheme. In response, *Saenz* invoked the citizenship clause to argue that the amendment limited Congress as well as the states. This rediscovery of the great amendment's first sentence is welcome—but, once again, somewhat selective. Two years ago, *Boerne* utterly overlooked this sentence, insisting that the Fourteenth Amendment limited only "state" action. In light of the citizenship clause, why cannot Congress declare certain rights and freedoms to be fundamental privileges and immunities of all Americans—just as under the Thirteenth Amendment Congress can outlaw certain practices as "badges and incidents of slavery"?

Of course, in *Boerne* Congress was trying to expand the list of fundamental privileges (creating broader rights of religion), whereas in *Saenz* Congress was trying to shrink the list, narrowing newcomers' equality rights. But this clean distinction may be too facile. Suppose Congress believes that there is a fundamental right not merely to intrastate equality but also to generous welfare benefits themselves. Suppose Congress further believes that, in a federal system, states are the best agents to make this right real, adjusting benefit levels to meet local conditions. If states fear (rightly or wrongly) that high benefits will turn them into welfare magnets, they might start lowering benefits for all of their citizens. In other words, there will be equality, but everybody will also be worse off.

Here, then, is the puzzle: In the name of vindicating one fundamental privilege, did the Court lose sight of another? By striking down one kind of temporary inequality, did the Court help entrench more permanent kinds of structural inequality? Beyond these specific questions is the issue of general judicial role: Having rediscovered an important part of our constitutional heritage, will the Court in future cases insist on claiming all this territory for itself, or will it prove more willing to share authority with Congress? In these respects, *Saenz* raises as many questions as it answers. ■

Albania Dispatch

Runaways

By EMILY BACKUS

MEDINA ADZOVIC SWEARS that, if she had known what the trip to Italy would be like, she never would have paid Albanian traffickers $1,700 to be smuggled along with her family out of Albania. The journey, she says, was even more terrifying than the gun-toting Serb who threatened to kill her if she did not abandon her home in the town of Pec, Kosovo, some two weeks earlier. It began at four o'clock in the morning, when the traffickers directed Medina, her husband, and their two girls, ages two and four, to kneel in the bottom of a flimsy, inflatable, rubber dinghy, outfitted with two powerful outboard motors. They obediently packed themselves in, knocking elbows with 36 other crouching passengers—mostly women, children, and the elderly. The skipper then steered them at full throttle for two and a half hours, in the dark, on the high seas. As their little dinghy pounded against the breakers of the Adriatic, wave after wave of frigid water splashed inside the boat. Upon reaching the Italian shore, they were spotted by a policeman, who yelled at the skipper to beach the dinghy. Instead, the skipper ordered his charges to get out of the boat. The Adzovics jumped into the water and waded to the shore—their two duffel bags and two toddlers in tow. The policeman then fired several shots at the trafficker, who sped away into the dawn.

Still, however harrowing their journey, the Adzovics should consider themselves lucky. Just two weeks ago, six Kosovars following the same route drowned when their dinghy crashed into rocks on the Albanian shore. Such accidents will likely become even more frequent as more and

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more Kosovar Albanians attempt to sneak into Italy. Already, Italian authorities have caught more than 3,000 migrants along the stretch of coast on Italy's heel between Bari and Otranto. Italian police say they have driven another couple thousand back to the Albanian coast. Almost all of the migrants are—or at least claim to be—Kosovar refugees.

MANY OF THE refugees are trying to join relatives who live in Western European countries or the United States. The Adzovic family, for example, went directly to the U.S. Embassy in Rome to seek refuge with Medina's mother in America. But the embassy rejected that request. Medina was surprised. After all, she had lived in New York for five years, and her oldest daughter, who was born there, is a U.S. citizen. What's more, she adds, "The U.S. said they would accept twenty thousand [Kosovar refugees], so why not us?"

Well, because, at least in theory, the United States and other Western countries have committed to accepting only those refugees based in Macedonia—whom the Macedonian government has refused to absorb, largely to avoid disrupting that nation's delicate ethnic balance. By contrast, the 440,000 Kosovar refugees who are currently in Albania have little chance of obtaining asylum in the West through official channels. But, if these same refugees can somehow make it into the West illegally, deportation back to Albania is indeed unlikely. Germany and Italy have even made it official: Kosovars who reach their borders are automatically allowed to stay and apply for legal asylum. Kosovar refugees who get to Switzerland will even be housed, fed, and given pocket money until their legal status is resolved. When Kosovars win legal status as refugees, the benefits continue until they are successfully repatriated.

By closing nearly all legal avenues through which the refugees can leave Albania and by rewarding those who undertake the perilous illegal journey, Western nations have unwittingly exacerbated the humanitarian crisis afflicting Kosovars. Albania has welcomed Kosovar refugees with open arms, but it is a nation of meager resources; and those refugees with relatives elsewhere are increasingly anxious to leave—so anxious that they will gladly fork over thousands of dollars to criminal migrant traffickers often more concerned with earning a buck than ensuring their clients' safety.

Tori, a scruffy-haired, beer-bellied, self-described dinghy owner in his mid-thirties, whom I met in Vlore, confirmed that business is good. NATO air strikes shut down Rinas Airport, where he once picked up illegal Kurdish refugees—allowed into the country by corrupt Albanian airline and police officials—by the carload. Now Kosovars have filled the gap. Tori offers them discount prices because they are easier to deliver to Italy than Albanians are. A 23-year-old trafficker, who would not give his name, told me that Kosovar children were the best passengers of all because they are treated with kid gloves by Italian police and take up less space.

The Italian government has long feared a situation like the present one and regards the Kosovar refugee problem as a national security threat. Crises in Albania have spilled over in the past, flooding Italy with refugees and infecting the country with additional organized crime. At a March conference in Milan, Italian prosecutor Francesco Borelli and Italy's top Mafia prosecutor, Piero Luigi Vigna, both blamed Albanian criminals for their involvement in drugs, arms, sex workers, and a burgeoning transnational trade in illegal migrants, including not just Kosovars and Albanians but Kurds, Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Chinese, and Afghans. Meanwhile, Germany and the other European Union members have long held Italy responsible for failing to prevent the illegal migrants, including asylum-seekers, from continuing north, slipping past borders that, under the EU's Schengen treaty, have been cleared of most controls.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, THEN, the Italians responded like firemen running to an inferno when, at the end of March, thousands of Kosovars began arriving at the Morini border crossing in northern Albania—sometimes at a rate of 2,000 an hour. Within 48 hours of the first arrivals, Italy's minister of the interior, Rosa Russo Jervolino, embarked for Morini to assess the situation. For several years now, Jervolino has helped cultivate strong bilateral ties with Albania in the hopes of containing illegal immigration. As part of this effort, the Interior Ministry had already installed 400 Italian police and navy troops along the Albanian coast. In theory, the police are supposed to assist, equip, and train the Albanian police. In practice, though, the Italians perform most of the work themselves—often playing cat and mouse with the traffickers in high-powered speed boats, trying to outmaneuver their dinghies and drive them back to shore. A navy ship stationed in the Strait of Otranto serves as an intelligence post, listening and dispatching information to forces along the Italian coast. There, between Otranto and Bari, four types of police and the coast guard patrol the land, sea, and air, ready to respond to any sign of the traffickers.

These measures have been only partly successful. Most nights, the traffickers leave from isolated beaches in small groups of two or three dinghies, their departures erratic enough to elude detection. On occasion, traffickers have launched flotillas of 70 dinghies or more. Forty were able to charge past the Italians on the night of April 27, delivering about 1,000 refugees to the Italian coast.

But the program's mere existence put the Italians in a good position to deliver security and aid to Albania once the Kosovo crisis started. The Italians called it Operation Rainbow. Within two days of the first arrivals in Kukes, the Italians were packing a navy ship, the *San Marco*, full of tents, trucks, hospital supplies, sleeping bags, mattresses, fire-brigade tankers, field kitchens, fuel, food, and hundreds of volunteers. Three weeks into the crisis, when the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees still had only 45 international staff members in all of Albania, the Italians had 900 people on the ground, operating Italian-made field hospitals and refugee camps and providing ground and air transport. And that was just the beginning. The Italians now have about 4,200 people in Albania, including 2,300 army troops, to which they will soon add a few hundred more. In the first month of the crisis, the Italians had far more people helping

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refugees in Albania than any other international body.

Without a doubt, Italy's collective effort has saved many lives, provided great comfort, and, to a large extent, preserved civil order in Albania. Still, the best refugee camp or Albanian host family cannot compete with the prospect of settling in the home of one's own kin and reestablishing a life that bears some semblance of normality. Even as she recalls the horrors of her journey into Italy, Medina Adzovic is quick to add that "[e]ven if someone were to shoot me, I wouldn't live in Albania." As long as other refugees share her sentiments, the trafficking crisis will continue. ■

Jerusalem's Y2K problem.

Tribulations

By GERSHOM GORENBERG

HAL LINDSEY STANDS on the east side of the Temple Mount and lectures in a quiet drawl to the 60 born-again Americans he's brought to the Holy Land. With his visor cap and weathered face, you could take Lindsey for a New Orleans tugboat captain—his profession before he found Jesus, attended the fundamentalist Dallas Theological Seminary, and wrote *The Late Great Planet Earth*, his 1970 guide to the world's end, which has sold some 30 million copies. Lindsey's literary success is just one indication of the popularity of dispensational premillennialism, the theology he espouses. "I believe the Temple stood here," Lindsey asserts, pointing north of the Dome of the Rock. It's an unorthodox view: archaeologists place the Jewish sanctuary exactly where the Muslim shrine now shines in the sun. Lindsey bases his dissent on a maverick scholar—and inspiration. "I was pacing off the distances here," he says, "and I believe the Holy Spirit just thundered in my ears Revelation 11:1-2 ... about the angel commanding that they measure out the Temple, and saying, 'Do not measure the outer court, for it is given to the gentiles.'" With no outer court, he explains, the Third Temple could be built with room left for the Dome. He expects it to happen in this generation, one of a series of events culminating in the End.

Back in his hotel room, Lindsey stresses his support for Israel. He was overjoyed after the Six Day War, both "because I loved Israelis personally, and ... it was a confirmation of what I knew had to happen." Indeed, *Planet Earth* hinted strongly that the End would come in 1988, 40 years after Israel's creation. Today Lindsey avoids dates, but he's confident that "people who were alive when Israel was founded will still be alive when it's all fulfilled." Not all evangelicals are premillennialists like Lindsey, and not all evangelical backing for Israel draws on eschatology. But, for millions of believers, prophecies of the End are central to religious life and to passionate support for Israel.

The Netanyahu government cultivated connections with evangelicals, pleased by their hawkish stance on Mideast issues. Yet Israelis, and other Jews, have reason to be wary—especially as apocalyptic fever rises at the turn of the millennium. Hopes for the End could boost the wave of tourists Israel expects in 2000, but they also pose risks that are making Israeli security officials nervous. Some Christian fundamentalists flirt with groups on the Israeli far right, particularly those interested in rebuilding the Temple—a program that could spark conflict with the Muslim world. Meanwhile, the very sentiments that drive fundamentalist backing for Israel also produced Jerry Falwell's recent remarks that the Antichrist is probably alive today and "must be male and Jewish"—a reminder of how easily philo-Semitism could morph into its antithesis.

FOR CHRISTIAN BIBLICAL literalists, Israel is the stage for the End: history's last battles will be fought at the valley of Megiddo, the biblical Armageddon; Jesus will return to Jerusalem's Mount of Olives. And, like Lindsey, many believers consistently cite the Jewish state's existence as *the* sign that biblical prophecies of the End are being fulfilled. In his 1996 book *Beginning of the End: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Coming Antichrist*, Texas Pastor John Hagee recalls his father hearing of Israel's creation and saying, "We have just heard the most important prophetic message ... until Jesus Christ returns to earth." Adds Hagee: "The generation which sees the rebirth of Israel is the terminal generation." Israel's presence, says Stephen O'Leary, a University of Southern California expert on fundamentalists, "supports the plausibility structure" of prophetic belief and thus fuels the evangelicals' affection for the Jewish state.

For Jews, that affection should produce the kind of discomfort an actor feels when people can't separate him from a character he has played: "The Jew" is loved as a star of a mythic drama. And coming scenes in that drama don't make one want to stay in the cast. An extreme example: Radio preacher Chuck Missler has said the Tribulation—the final seven years of history—will "make the Holocaust ... look like a picnic." Jews who survive are expected, of course, to accept Jesus as Messiah. It's hardly surprising then that Jerry Falwell has filled in the rest of the script by casting a Jew as the Antichrist. (When I asked him if he might not be reviving Christian anti-Semitism through such statements, Falwell replied, "I doubt the Jewish people and the state of Israel have a better friend outside their own community than Jerry Falwell.")

Though Falwell insists that he doesn't set dates, he is clearly caught up in the apocalyptic hopes unleashed by the millennium's impending close. In a sermon posted on his website, Falwell cites two popular arguments for why the world will likely end in 2000—the belief that the world will be 6,000 years old next year and the "three-day theory," which holds that, since Jesus rose on the third day,

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he is likely to return to earth at the beginning of the third millennium. Falwell's public flirting with the year 2000 is typical. When the year passes, new dates will be given and hopes most likely will grow even more intense as the years of the "terminal generation" tick away. Already, scores of hopefuls are setting up camp in Jerusalem to await the End.

AL-AZARIYA, JUST BELOW Jerusalem's Mount of Olives, has the typical look of a Palestinian town: low storefronts line a sidewalkless main road; narrow streets twist uphill. In the apartment above the Al-Manar pharmacy, they're singing when I enter—25 people belting out "Amazing Grace" while Brother David, the minister, shakes a tambourine. David arrived in Israel from the United States 19 years ago and shed both his passport and his last name. The Israeli authorities jailed him in the early '90s as an illegal alien but were unable to deport him since they could not prove his nationality. After his release, he moved to Al-Azariya to await the Second Coming. He estimates that, by last summer, 100 born-again Christians from overseas had settled there and in neighboring A-Tur. Fifty more have arrived in the months since. Among them is Emma Bluetop, an ex-hairdresser from Toronto who bills herself as "Daughter of Zion Prophetic Ministry" and who told me: "I expect the [Rapture] between Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot 2000," with World War III starting in November.

David's Wednesday night prayer meetings tend toward the Pentecostal: encouraged by David to "sanctify the Lord," a young American man begins with a burst of syllables, speaking in tongues. Afterward, I sit with Raymond, a tattooed, leather-jacketed West Coaster who says he spent more than a decade of his 27 years in jail for theft before finding Jesus. The Antichrist "is alive today," he says. "Israel has the biggest Antichrist spirit that's ever been.... I can come to this land to make aliyah if I'm a Russian Jew, if I'm an American Jew. I can believe in no God at all.... But, if I believe Jesus Christ is the Messiah, I can't become a citizen of Israel." That's Falwell's language taken a step further. One wonders where the rhetoric would move if Israel ever, say, decided to evict those in this community whose visas had run out.

For now, the Mount of Olives believers are harmless—happy to wait, pray, and distribute used clothes or perhaps an Arabic Testament to their Palestinian neighbors. But, at the least, they're a visible sign that millennium fever can sweep people out of their mundane lives and bring them to Jerusalem expecting epiphanies. Next year, the number settling in Al-Azariya seems certain to grow. Many more people will pay visits to the Holy Land, entranced not only by its history but by its expected future.

Of course, only a small part of the wave of pilgrims expected in 2000 will be thinking eschatology. The largest number of visitors are expected to be Catholics, since Pope John Paul II has called for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2000 and is expected to come himself. And for the Jewish state to host an immense Christian celebration is an ecumenical leap forward, worthy of hallelujahs.

Yet Israel can't avoid the risks presented by those guests whose apocalyptic hopes are afire with the date and the place. There is, for example, the chance that Israeli officials will stumble into a confrontation with an extreme sect, as U.S. agents did at Waco. The danger won't end with 2000. The history of millennarian movements shows that risks rise when disappointment sets in, when dates pass and nothing happens. The continued failure of prophecy, argues O'Leary, is what drove the Heaven's Gate cult to suicide in 1997, in a final bid to force the End.

The Israeli security officials charged with preventing similar tragedies face a delicate task. The Concerned Christians affair underlines their conundrum. According to relatives of the 80 followers of that Colorado sect, the group's leader, Monte Kim Miller, predicts that he and another member of his group will die and be resurrected in Jerusalem in December 1999, as the two witnesses described in Revelation 11. In early January, Israeli police and internal security agents raided two homes near Jerusalem, arresting and deporting 14 members of the group who'd slipped into the country. At one of the houses, a journalist found a cassette lecture in which a man, almost certainly Miller, calmly describes Charles Manson's murder of the pregnant Sharon Tate as representing "the killing of Rosemary's Baby, which [is] a killing of the Roman Antichrist.... The Manson murders foretell the slaying of America's Antichrist and America itself by the Lord." No one knows what Miller might do to realize his prediction of martyrdom.

Yet it's not clear whether police have hard evidence for their evaluation, cited in an official statement, that the sect "intended to carry out violent and extreme acts ... to bring about the Second Coming." And, by rushing to act, security forces may have actually increased the chance of a Waco-style confrontation. Miller will still want to reach Jerusalem. In premillennialist predictions, the Antichrist is commonly described as forging a covenant with Israel; Miller may decide that's happened.

Then again, when a nation has the bad luck to be a mythological celebrity, almost anything that happens there can be seen as confirming prophecy. And nowhere are the dangers clearer than at the 35-acre platform in the Old City where the Temple once stood.

"WE WILL LIBERATE the Temple Mount, even if the political leadership doesn't want to," Gershon Salomon roared. "Instead of the Dome of the Rock and mosques, the flag of Israel and the Temple!" The crowd of nearly 1,500 at last September's meeting of the Movement for the Establishment of the Temple answered Salomon with a hurricane of cheers and clapping. The gathering was a show of strength for Israel's radical religious right. It was also a show of legitimacy: the chairman of the Knesset Law Committee mailed out thousands of invitations on parliamentary stationery; he and the Netanyahu government's deputy education minister sent videotaped greetings. Salomon, head of the Temple Mount Faithful, rode the waves of applause, declaring, "It's the will of Providence that we struggle to remove the abominations from the Mount."

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In his downtown Jerusalem office, Salomon speaks in a warm voice. He walks with a cane, a reminder of injuries sustained as an Israeli officer in a mid-'60s skirmish that he survived, he's certain, because God chose him for his current role. With pride, he tells of his group's October 1990 bid to lay a cornerstone for the Third Temple. That incident set off clashes between Muslim worshipers and Israeli police on the Temple Mount and ended with a score of Palestinians dead. For others, it was proof of how even a symbolic threat to the Muslim shrines can spark violence. Salomon remembers it as sparking worldwide interest in his organization and the Temple.

SINCE THEN, SALOMON says, he has received regular invitations to lecture to "Bible-believing" Christians abroad and tour groups in Israel. The Faithful receives Christian donations, both for its operating budget and for a fund to build the Temple. "It's not just money," Salomon says. "Women send us their jewelry." He says that most of his funds come from Jews, though a former activist in the Faithful told me Christians "are responsible for Gershon Salomon having a budget."

Salomon, like much of Israel's religious right, is caught up in his own end-of-history drama: Israel's creation and the Six Day War victory herald the final Redemption. "The prophets said ... that when the people of Israel return to the Land of Israel in the End of Days, the gentiles will carry them as a mother carries her child," he says. Premillennialists, in return, regard the Faithful and similar groups as proof that the Jews are on the verge of building the Temple.

Ironically, premillennialists consider the Temple essential for the End Times because they expect the Antichrist to desecrate it. For John Hagee, building the sanctuary has another function: setting off the wars that will lead to Armageddon. There's a large measure of realism in that particular apocalyptic fantasy. The nightmare of Israeli security officials is a bid to clear the ground for the Third Temple. There have already been several attempts: in 1969, Michael Dennis Rohan, an Australian fundamentalist Christian, set fire to Al-Aqsa Mosque. A 1982 plot by a Jewish underground group to destroy the Dome of the Rock was aimed specifically at reigniting conflict with the Arab world to prevent the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai.

In recent months, Israeli police say, they've arrested five "mentally ill" people—three Christians and two Jews—who planned attacks or suicides on the Mount. According to press reports, officials received warnings that two of them planned a "provocation" on the Mount that would have resulted in their own deaths and ignited Armageddon. Fearing even more threats, the government recently budgeted $11 million to improve security measures at the Temple Mount.

Premillennialists commonly combine intense expectation of the End with quietism: the process is in God's hands, not human ones. So does a large movement bear responsibility for fanatics at its fringes or for individual leaders who can't control their tongues? Not directly. But, seen through Israeli experience, the problem is rhetorical excess. Before Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, rightist rabbis said giving up territory was tantamount to a capital offense. Later they'd insist that was a metaphor. But one man took the metaphors literally. Premillennialists who hint at the Antichrist's identity, or at God arranging to get rid of the Muslim shrines, take the same risk.

As I leave the Temple Mount with Hal Lindsey, he banters with his Israeli tour guide about the site's tense Muslim guards. The guide recounts: "I had this lady say once, 'Why don't the Jews tear this place down and build the Temple?' And a Muslim guard was standing right next to us." Lindsey laughs, "That could start a holocaust."

I admit I fail to see the humor. ■

Fighting today's wars with yesterday's military.

Combat Unready

By ANDREW J. BACEVICH

WHATEVER THE EVENTUAL outcome of Operation Allied Force, one by-product has already been the deflation of lingering illusions about U.S. military omnipotence. And, at least in this respect, the results of this ill-conceived campaign may prove salutary.

Since the end of the cold war, Americans have entertained—and the Clinton administration has fostered—greatly expanded expectations about what their Armed Forces can and ought to accomplish. The Persian Gulf war, surprisingly cheap and seemingly decisive, induced a seismic change in thinking about military affairs. The ability of the United States to win wars now taken for granted, attention shifted to a new question: how to exploit American military preeminence to further the larger purposes of U.S. policy.

Underlying these expectations were some crucial and largely untested assumptions: first, that general recognition of America's sheer might on the part of other nations would translate into broad deference to U.S. policy when backed by military power; second, that American forces would accomplish their tasks expeditiously and with minimal cost, especially in loss of life; and third, that the existing military establishment—essentially the force inherited from the cold war, trimmed in size by one-third—could handle without difficulty a raft of new missions. As long as the rest of the world conceded the futility of challenging America's well-oiled military juggernaut, the pursuit of an expanded security agenda promised to yield substantial returns while entailing negligible risk. The overwhelming might of U.S. forces would make it unnecessary actually to employ overwhelming force, thereby obviating the dangers and sacrifices that real war entails.

In calling NATO's bluff and in relentlessly pursuing his own

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objectives despite weeks of bombing, Slobodan Milosevic has demolished those assumptions. By wresting the initiative from his expensively armed adversaries and compelling the United States to escalate the conflict far beyond its intended parameters, the Yugoslav dictator has raised troubling questions about the competence and wisdom of American leaders, both military and civilian. More important, however, the protracted Balkan war reveals the extent to which the principles informing American military policy—and the structure of its forces—are ill-suited for the post-cold-war era.

KOSOVO IS NOT Vietnam transplanted to the 1990s. A more apt comparison, drawn from another nation's experience, is Israel's 1982 incursion into Lebanon: not an outright defeat but a campaign against an inferior foe gone inexplicably awry. Operation Peace for Galilee miscarried not because Israeli soldiers lacked guts or skill but because the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) had not adapted to the political sea change that Israel's victory in 1967 had produced. Embarking upon what the government had advertised as a limited incursion, the IDF found itself mired in an ugly conflict where its preferred style of warfare—lightning thrusts by mechanized columns—proved at best marginally useful. The outcome—morally problematic, politically divisive, and operationally frustrating—not only tarnished the IDF's reputation but also exposed a previously undetected gap between Israel's military means and its strategic ends.

In similar fashion, since the end of the cold war, America's Armed Forces—like the IDF following the Six Day War—have been drifting inexorably toward institutional crisis. Guided by a defective strategic compass and buffeted by cultural storms, the American military has lost its way. Its size, structure, doctrine, identity, and ethos are inappropriate for the strategic conditions created by end of the cold war: the apparent suspension of great-power rivalry and the unleashing of long-repressed sources of political instability.

Thus, Kosovo illuminates problems that have festered for years. As many critics have noted, U.S. forces today suffer from operational overstretch. Proliferating requirements to keep, make, and enforce peace, interdict drug traffickers, rescue failed states, promote democracy, and respond to humanitarian catastrophes have the armed services near the end of their tether.

Republicans are quick to exploit evidence of overstretch for political ends, but the issue here goes beyond politics. In truth, exhausting operational demands are wearing out equipment and people. Testifying before Congress in January, the Joint Chiefs acknowledged growing readiness problems, confirming what anecdotal evidence from the field had long suggested. General Dennis Reimer, the Army chief of staff, made the essential point: for all the services, the central challenge of the '90s has been to meet expanding requirements with diminishing resources. Reviving a theme from the 1970s, references to a "hollow force" have become commonplace and appear increasingly credible.

Given the administration's appetite for intervention, the inadequacy of the existing force structure—the number of combat battalions, air squadrons, and warships—is by now indisputable. Mustering the armada for Operation Allied Force required the Air Force, for example, to suspend its patrols over Iraq's northern no-fly zone. Getting the aircraft carrier *Theodore Roosevelt* (and its warship escorts) into the Adriatic to reinforce the campaign against Yugoslavia obliged the Navy to cancel that carrier's planned deployment to the Persian Gulf. To cover the Gulf, the Navy diverted the *Kitty Hawk* from the Pacific. As a result, the Pacific is without a carrier, a fact unlikely to escape notice in Beijing or in other Asian capitals that count on a strong U.S. military presence to maintain the regional balance of power.

Repeated deployments and more frequent family separations undermine troop morale. As a result, increasing numbers of officers and enlisted members are leaving the service. The exodus is especially evident among those possessing skills that translate into high-paying civilian jobs. For example, the Air Force is currently short 700 pilots and estimates that by 2002 the shortfall will reach 15 percent of its total needs.

ROBERT NEUBECKER

In flush economic times, the services are increasingly hard-pressed to replace those opting for civilian life. The Department of Defense projects that this year both the Army and the Air Force will fail to meet their recruiting goals—this despite lower enlistment standards. At American universities, ROTC programs—a chief source of officer accessions—are failing to meet service requirements for young leaders. Last year, Navy ROTC had a goal of 1,050 officers but commissioned just 685. The Marines' goal was 225, with only 172 commissioned. Army ROTC fell more than 200 officers shy of its objective in 1998, a deficit projected to reach 500 this year. In short, the all-volunteer force is running out of volunteers.

CONTEMPLATING SUCH SIGNS of military stress, many critics are only too happy to blame the commander-in-chief. From the outset of his first term, President Clinton has inspired little affection from soldiers and little respect from policy analysts specializing in national security. To be fair, however, the president has not been well-served by the senior military leaders who have presided over the services in the past decade. From the chairman of the Joint Chiefs on down, the four-star generals of the post-Colin-Powell era have been distinguished primarily by their single-minded determination to perpetuate the familiar: an Army based on heavy tanks, a Navy enamored with mammoth aircraft carriers, and an Air Force in the thrall of strategic bombing. Today's military relies on weapons that trace their lineage to

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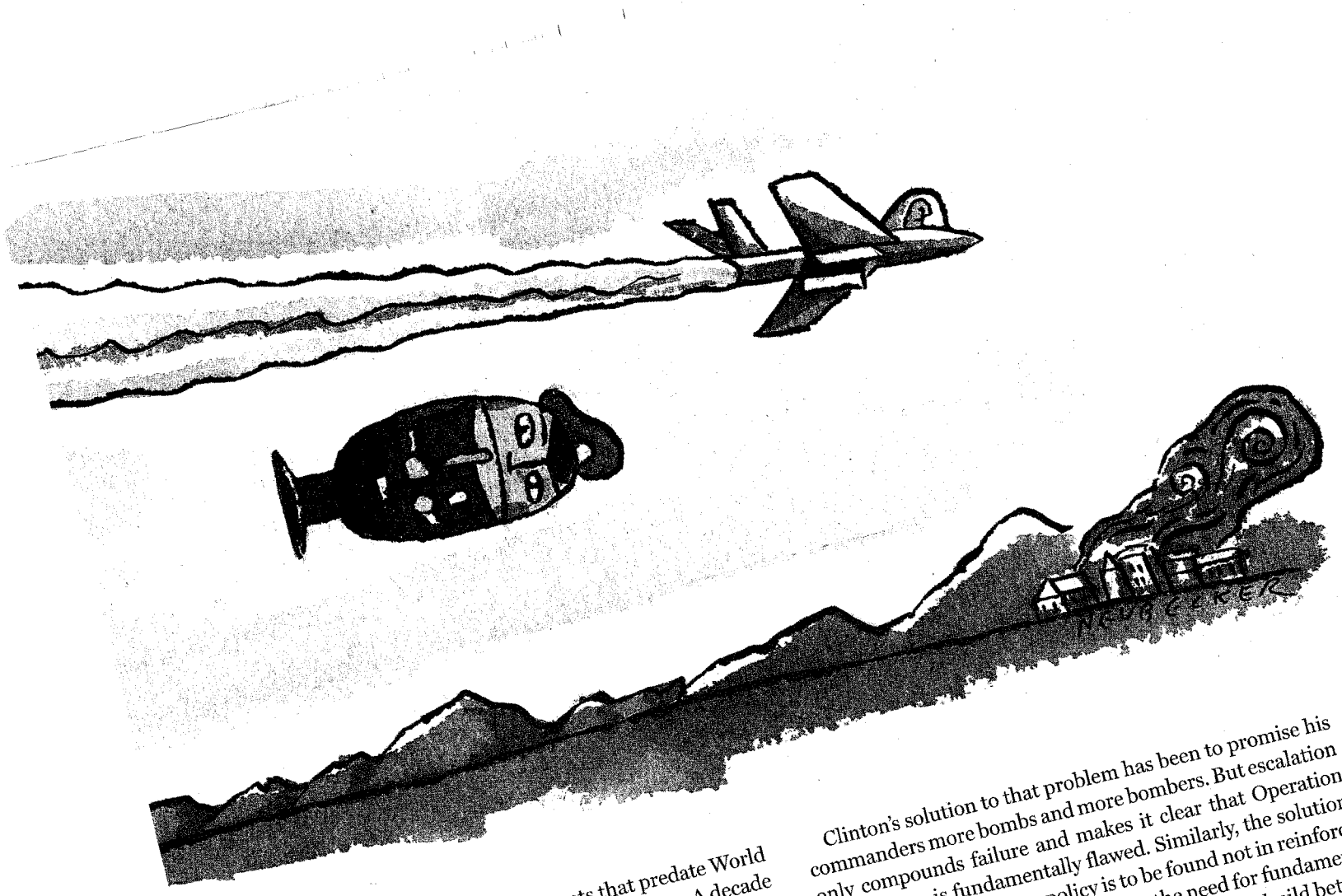

World War I, clings to doctrinal precepts that predate World War II, and still nurses resentments from Vietnam. A decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the U.S. military remains a scaled-down version of the establishment raised to fight the Evil Empire.

Faced with any problem, the prevailing instinct in the upper echelons of the Pentagon is to throw money at it. Money will buy structure and new, more capable hardware. Pay raises and improved benefits will enable the military to compete more effectively in bidding for the services of American youth. Aggressive marketing—snappy jingles and more television advertising—can correct the recruiting shortfall. (The Navy has even hired filmmaker Spike Lee to produce a series of recruiting ads.) According to the conventional wisdom, the Defense Department doesn't have any difficulties that money can't fix.

But the conventional wisdom is wrong. The real problem is that neither political leaders nor soldiers nor the American people have faced up to the military implications of the strategy to which the nation has adhered since the cold war ended. The goals animating that strategy have rendered obsolete military practices that even a decade ago seemed eminently sensible. The air war against Yugoslavia makes the point. Conducted with exemplary professionalism by superbly trained crews flying the finest aircraft and employing the most sophisticated munitions that money can buy, that campaign has been masterful in every respect except one: it has been irrelevant to the situation at hand.

Clinton's solution to that problem has been to promise his commanders more bombs and more bombers. But escalation only compounds failure and makes it clear that Operation Allied Force is fundamentally flawed. Similarly, the solution to what ails U.S. military policy is to be found not in reinforcing the status quo but in recognizing the need for fundamental change. At its heart, the requirement is not to build better or more technologically advanced weapons, to devise better tactics, or to exploit the military potential of the information revolution, though all of these have their place. Rather, the requirement is to let go of ideas that are outmoded or plainly false. Faced with a clamor to "do something" in response to some untoward development, political authorities need to abandon their penchant for using military power as a way of testifying to their good intentions, all the while hoping that the electorate won't balk at the cost.

Soldiers need to relinquish the pretense of girding themselves for an increasingly improbable major theater war, the Pentagon's canonical scenario that amounts to a reprise of Desert Storm either in the Gulf or in Korea. The American people need to abandon the fantasy that, as long as they allocate three to four percent of the gross domestic product per year to "support the troops," U.S. military supremacy will be self-sustaining and perpetual.

A people indulging unrealistic expectations of what its military can accomplish and yet largely disengaged from military affairs; civilian leaders who impose heavy new burdens on soldiers while remaining oblivious to the imperative of nurturing sound military institutions and preserving an appropriate professional culture; senior officers who fear

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change, lack imagination, and distrust their political masters: These comprise the ingredients of the incipient crisis that has manifested itself in Kosovo.

FORESTALLING THAT CRISIS requires a return to first-order questions: What is the definition of national security? What are the means necessary to achieve the ends of U.S. national security policy? Whether for good or ill, the United States increasingly defines its security interests in terms of its ideals. Certainly this has been the case in the Balkans. Only if the states composing the international community are democratic, market-oriented, and adherents to American concepts of human rights can the United States afford to feel safe. According to this ambitious construct, U.S. national security requires not simply order among nations but also justice within them.

Events of the '90s have provided a constant reminder that large chunks of that community reject the norms to which the United States subscribes. To address this problem, American soldiers have seemingly been pressed willy-nilly into service as a global 911 force: feeding the starving, restoring democracy, ending ethnic cleansing, isolating rogue regimes, and punishing terrorists—and not incidentally affirming the efficacy of American power.

Without bothering to change the name, the architects of this experiment transformed the Department of Defense into a Department of Power Projection. They did so without obliging their military to retool itself for its new role and without advising American citizens of complications that might ensue. Soldiers continued to maintain the fiction that they constitute a warrior elite devoted to winning a peace-loving nation's infrequent wars—the Desert Storm that crops up every couple of decades. The people imagined that, with the cold war over, an era of peace beckoned.

In Kosovo, the implications of permitting these twin misunderstandings have become clear. There, in the name of peace, Bill Clinton initiates war. Unwilling to call that war by its rightful name, he disguises it with obfuscation and evasion. Justifying U.S. involvement as a moral imperative, he renounces military options (such as the introduction of ground troops) that might actually halt or undo Milosevic's criminal assault on his own people. Persuaded that the American people will acquiesce in conflict only so long as they remain immune to its impact, he and his commanders orchestrate a campaign of sustained high-altitude bombing to bludgeon Serbia into submission.

The result—combining self-denial with massive violence—is militarily ineffective and morally problematic. Given the administration's extreme aversion to U.S. casualties, the allied air campaign has targeted "infrastructure"—the destruction of Yugoslavia's electrical grid, for example—thereby giving Serb forces in the field the time needed to complete their campaign of ethnic cleansing. Meanwhile, one indirect and predictable consequence of this strategy has been to increase the number of Serb civilians and ethnic Albanians killed and maimed as a by-product of allied bombing. Noncombatants pay with their lives to insure that none of our pilots is lost.

NO ONE DOUBTS that the United States possesses ample power to prevail against Yugoslavia. Indeed, the strategic ambitions of our political leaders demand that we do so. Yet, by insulating the people from the implications of those ambitions and by deferring to the military to define its role in fulfilling them, the Clinton administration all but guarantees failure. Unless Americans accept the fact that fostering their values (and hence guaranteeing their security) may well entail the routine use of military power, a strategy that impels the United States to intervene in places like Kosovo becomes unsustainable. Unless soldiers embrace the idea that their job is not to fight the occasional war but to serve as an armed international constabulary, efforts to rescue the persecuted or to bring thugs to justice will produce little other than the pointless destruction inflicted daily on Serbia.

Whether Americans and their soldiers are willing to shoulder the considerable burdens implied by such a shift in military thinking is, of course, a very large question. Given the current spacious definition of American responsibilities, such a policy might well require spending considerably above current levels. It could mean an active force larger than the present 1.4 million, obliging society either to motivate young people to volunteer in substantially greater numbers or to institute a system of national service with a military option. Viewing the military as a global constabulary would certainly imply greater willingness to accept casualties—much as subjecting police officers to danger forms part of the price of securing tranquility at home.

The ethos of this force would also differ. The prototypical G.I. would not be Steven Spielberg's Captain John Miller, the citizen-soldier eager to finish the job and go home. Nor would it be Lieutenant Kelly Flinn, lovelorn Gen-Xer asserting women's place among the "brotherhood" of warriors. Rather, it might be any number of now-forgotten military figures of the early twentieth century whose thankless job it was—without complaint—to occupy Cuba, pacify the Philippines, contain revolution in Mexico, patrol the Yangtze, or police the Caribbean from Managua to Santo Domingo. For, in truth, the constabulary tradition is not as foreign to the nation's military experience as Americans like to pretend. There is no great secret to handling the military problem posed by Slobodan Milosevic. All that's required is to recover from our self-induced amnesia and apply the lessons that earlier generations learned in dealing with the likes of Emilio Aguinaldo and Cesar Augusto Sandino.

Americans have a choice. Either they can adapt U.S. forces to meet the objectively quasi-imperial obligations of the world's "indispensable nation." Or they can scale down their aspirations—settling for order rather than justice—thereby preserving the minimally demanding arrangements that allowed the United States for a brief period to boast of being the World's Only Superpower. The bungled war in Kosovo suggests that the one thing the United States dare not do—lest that title become a source of derision—is to ignore the yawning disparity between its strategic ambitions and its actual military policy. ■

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Why Americans go soft in the head for The Economist.

London Fog

By ANDREW SULLIVAN

APART FROM AUSTIN POWERS, there can be few British institutions as groovy right now as *The Economist*. *Der Spiegel* has hailed its "legendary influence." *Vanity Fair* has written that "the positions [*The Economist*] takes change the minds that matter." In Britain, the *Sunday Telegraph* has declared that "it is widely regarded as the smartest, most influential weekly magazine in the world." In America, it is regularly fawned on as a font of journalistic reason. Anthony Lewis has referred to it in more than 50 columns in recent years, deferring to *The Economist* on such diverse subjects as tax cuts, Patrick Buchanan, medical marijuana, tort reform, Bosnia, East Timor, Middle East peace, Bob Dole, and mandatory-minimum sentences. Bill Gates has boasted of reading it cover to cover. According to the magazine's media kit, Larry Ellison, the CEO of Oracle, has remarked: "I used to think. Now, I just read *The Economist*."

And you can see why the magazine has earned such shagadelic plaudits. At a time when other newsmagazines are falling over one another to put models, movie stars, and diet pills on the cover, *The Economist* still doesn't shrink from a 20-page report on Indonesian banks or a sassy take on the Nigerian economy. No other newsstand magazine could seriously hawk the headline: "TELECOMMUNICATIONS: A SURVEY." And, as a weekly compost of world news and economics, it's very hard to beat—a kind of *Reader's Digest* for the overclass. It's written in the kind of Oxbridge prose that trips felicitously into one ear and out the other, and it subtly flatters some Americans into feeling that they are sitting in on a combination of an English senior common room and a seminar at Davos. Besides, it's hard to dislike a magazine that can run a photo of the pope meeting with Bill Clinton over the caption: "THAT'S 1,000 HAIL MARYS."

It's also, as a former high-level staffer puts it, "fantastically profitable." Last year, according to *The Economist*'s editor, Bill Emmott, it raked in close to $40 million in profits, unheard of in serious magazine journalism and only slightly more than what *The New Yorker* was recently rumored to be losing. Packed with luxury-goods ads and corporate image advertising, one in three of its American readers is a millionaire, and one in two is in top management with an income of more than $100,000. Its circulation has risen from 300,000 in the mid-'80s to close to 700,000 today, with more than 300,000 in the United States. (Although it is still referred to by Anglophiles as *The Economist* of London, its British readership is roughly one-sixth of its total.) At a subscription price of $125 per year for a black-and-white magazine, its marketing success is unparalleled.

But there's a funny thing about *The Economist*. The closer you look, the weaker it gets. Beneath the shrewd blizzard of one-liners, Oxford Union ripostes, and snazzy graphs, the little secret of *The Economist* is that it actually contains less original reporting than many other newsmagazines, relies heavily on amateur stringers for write-ups of other news sources, and, when it comes to its vaunted analysis, has shown a remarkable capacity over the past couple of years to be demonstrably wrong. As its circulation grows apace—it was one of the five fastest-growing magazines in America last year—and its reputation expands even further, the marketing genius of *The Economist* has become more and more out of line with its journalistic ordinariness.

WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINES, OF course, are not an easy venture. At a time of proliferating sources of information and the punditization of news, the project has become even more elusive. The difficulty lies in summarizing a week's events in the entire world in a way that is actually interesting and informative to a reader who might have read at least one daily newspaper, surfed the Web, or watched a fair amount of cable in the previous seven days. One approach is to rewrite the news as idiosyncratic editorials, the kind of thing some opinion magazines aim for. Another is to report the news more deeply and coherently than other media, as other newsmagazines are supposed to do. Another still is to find stories that appear nowhere else, or to specialize in one area and cover it exhaustively.

Unfortunately, *The Economist* does a little of each of these things but none of them very well. It has a far smaller reporting and editorial staff than other newsmagazines, so it relies predominantly on other news outlets and stringers for its rewrite of the week's news. It covers international affairs far more comprehensively than other magazines, so it spreads its wealth even more thinly than most. (It has, for example, one correspondent for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa.) Its opinionizing is largely reserved for its opening editorials, which vary from the glib to the acute but make up a tiny fraction of its pages. And, although it occasionally finds nuggets of stories that do not appear elsewhere, they tend to be of the abstruse variety and add more detail than depth. As Bill Emmott dryly remarks, "Sometimes we do add hard fact, but that isn't our principal appeal."

Take its weekly survey on the United States, a perfect example of *The Economist*'s strange allure. It's a section designed to sum up the United States in a way no one else does. But a randomly picked recent issue—April 10—shows

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how implausible an objective this is. The section led with a summary of how Republican candidates had responded to the Kosovo crisis, the premise being that reactions to Kosovo could be "a pre-primary electability indicator." The piece itself replayed much of the week's newspaper reporting (a quick detour through Nexis shows that nothing new had been added by the magazine) but then turned around and argued that none of it really mattered, since money and domestic issues would likely decide the Republican campaign. This was the lead item. News on hate crimes and employment were squeezed into a couple of hundred words, *USA Today*-style. A small piece on the election of a Green Party candidate in Oakland was better reported in *The Washington Post* almost a week earlier, and the final "Lexington" column was a thumb-sucker on the U.S.-China relationship on the eve of the visit of Prime Minister Zhu Rongji. The columnist's take? "The public spin for Mr. Zhu's trip may yet prevent it from becoming a public relations disaster for both sides. Yet the visit may, in hindsight, mark the symbolic point at which 'strategic partnership' became 'strategic competition.'" Only time would tell.

In addition, one lengthy piece summarized a report on Chicago urban planning but added scant political or cultural context. Another story detailed a spate of grave robberies in New Orleans, and another mentioned the environmental pressures on the prairie dog. Each of these last two pieces was a classic "stringer" piece, replete with a few colorful moments and scantily reported elsewhere. But, given their trivial content, it is not hard to see why.

So what, one wonders, is the purpose of the American survey? It's not a heavy read, and it has the usual jolly captions and photographs (a classic is a picture of a bird of prey on the White House lawn with the caption: "ONE HAWK IN THE WHITE HOUSE, AT LEAST"). But it can scarcely tell anyone in America anything significant that he or she didn't already know. It has no original take on the news, except a tone of whimsical condescension, and it adds no significant new reporting to what a brief ruffle through a couple of newspapers could easily provide. This is hardly surprising since *The Economist* employs a total of seven full-time reporters to cover the United States.

The only plausible purpose of the survey is therefore to inform readers outside the United States of what is going on inside the United States, if they happen to care about prairie dogs. Bill Emmott even argues as much, saying that brief news summaries for expatriates is, in fact, one of the magazine's strengths. That's why the editor of the U.S. survey is, oddly enough, in London. "The fact that we're from the outside from a relatively unimportant country means we have an extra piece of credibility," he explains. Rough translation: We're right because we're British.

PERHAPS THE MAGAZINE'S coverage of business and finance is better. This, after all, is its specialty. So I tried an experiment. I picked up the business section of another recent issue. In the March 27 edition, five out of seven business stories had appeared in major daily newspapers sooner and with as much, if not more, detail as in *The Economist*. There were two exceptions. The lead story was an oddly speculative tale of Airbus's competition with Boeing and the wild guesses both companies are making about the shape of future air traffic, especially in Asia. It was well-written but hazarded few clear predictions and was at times bewildering for the nonspecialist reader. (The thrust of the article, that Airbus was planning to expand into super-jumbos, was somewhat undermined a month later by Airbus's announcement of a new, small 107-seat plane.) The other exclusive was a short piece on how small biotech companies were lagging large biotech companies in the stock market. Since the weakness of small caps is perhaps one of the most familiar market stories of the past few years, this hardly counts as news, although the focus was original.

As for the rest, it was more *Reader's Digest*. *The Economist*'s second story, about a merger of two European power equipment companies, offered little more than a *New York Times* story of the previous Wednesday and indeed used the same phraseology on occasion. To be sure, *The Economist* spun its story as a tale of industry decline. The *Times* was more formulaic, framing the story around declining sales in Asia. But value added? Hardly. A piece about OPEC's volteface on oil production took no prisoners—"Could this mark the return of OPEC? It is far from clear"—and again offered nothing that wasn't exhaustively outlined in the week's *Times*, which also offered better geopolitical analysis of what was propelling OPEC's new mood. The *Times*' coverage of the merger battle between luxury-goods-makers LVMH and Gucci also bested *The Economist*'s. In a few hundred words, *The Economist* focused on the egos of the two company bosses—and added some unilluminating details. The *Times* covered both the color of the moguls' duel and, in a separate story, put the deal in the context of other European mergers. The *Los Angeles Times* conveyed almost as much information as *The Economist*, and both papers beat *The Economist*'s deadline easily. The same could be said for *The Economist*'s uninspired summary of two telecommunications mergers as well.

BUT MAYBE *The Economist* should be judged not for its views of the past but for its fearless ability to predict and analyze the future. This is a business-oriented magazine, after all, and its cachet lies in pitching itself to the international businessman or politician as an invaluable source of unique information. Its media kit parades endorsements from, among others, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, Giovanni Agnelli, president of Fiat, and Professor Michael Porter of Harvard Business School. Unfortunately, any international executive or even any 401(k) investor who made business decisions on the basis of *The Economist*'s recent predictions would soon be unable to afford its annual subscription price.

Perhaps crude oil is a good a place to start. On March 6, *The Economist* put a picture of a gushing oil well on its cover with the headline: "DROWNING IN OIL." Inside, it analyzed the consequences of a dramatic decline in oil prices worldwide. "Oil is cheaper today, in real terms, than it was in 1973," the magazine opined. "After two OPEC-induced decades of

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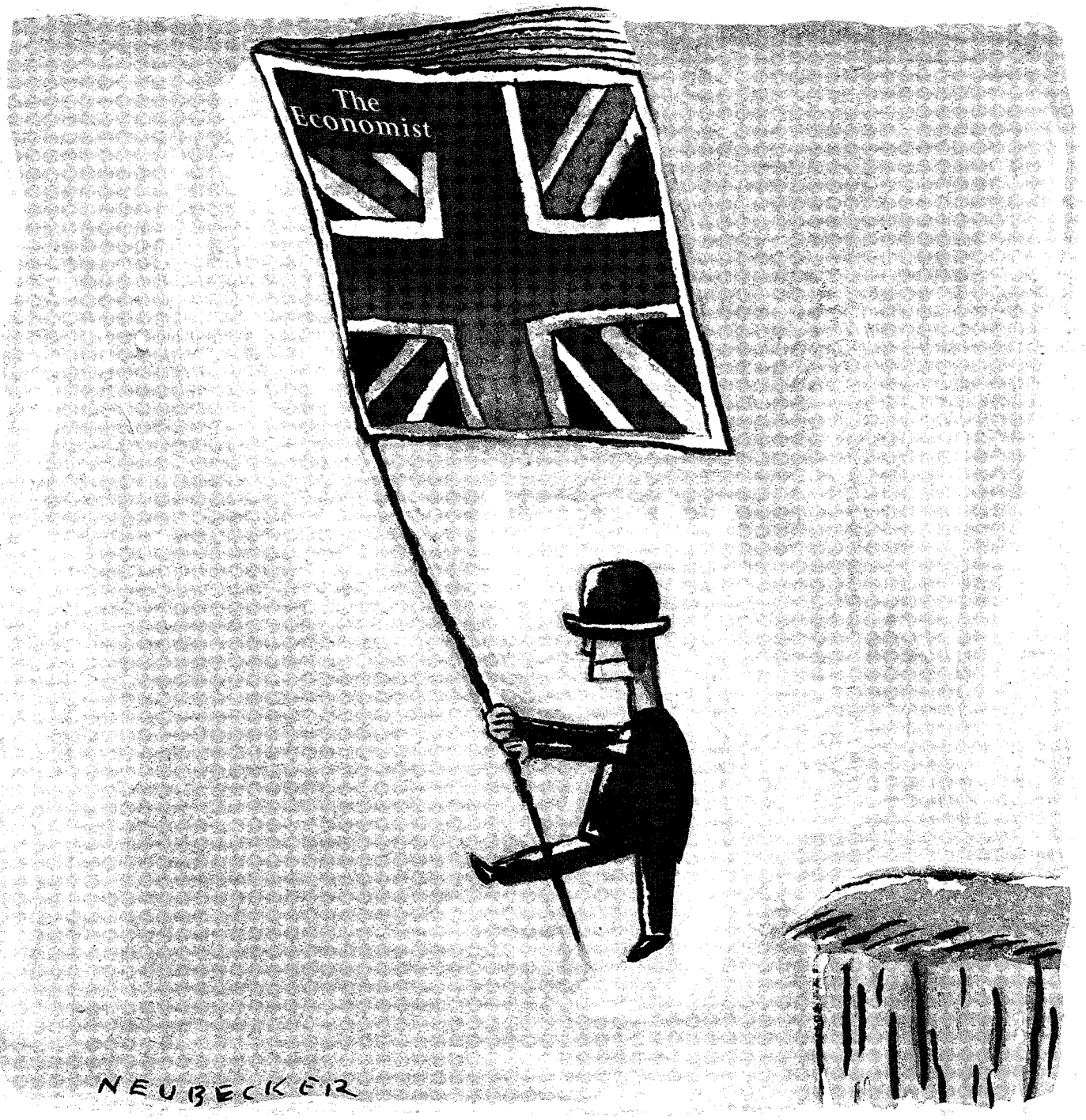

ROBERT NEUBECKER

expensive oil, oil producers and the oil industry as a whole have more or less given up hope that prices might rebound soon. The chairman of Royal Dutch/Shell, Mark Moody-Stuart, three months ago unveiled a five-year plan that assumed a price of $14 a barrel. He has since publicly mused about oil at $11.... Yet here is a thought: $10 might actually be too optimistic. We may be heading for $5."

This is exactly the kind of crisp, analytical journalism we have come to expect from *The Economist*, exactly what you might buy and read it for. Pity it was wrong. Within a couple of months, the price of crude oil had risen to just under $20 per barrel. In reaction to plummeting oil prices, OPEC cut production and raised prices almost as soon as the magazine's cheap-oil cover hit the stands. There was an inkling of such a move in *The Economist*'s pages, but the magazine reassured its readers that "the impact of any such [production] cuts will be small." The editors buried the subsequent news of the price hike deep in the magazine's pages only a few weeks later. Of course, close to $20 per barrel may not last, and OPEC may once again fail to hold together. But $5 per barrel still does not look like a good call.

Then there is *The Economist*'s grip on the world economy as a whole. Perhaps it's a little unfair to point out that, three years ago, *The Economist*'s then-Moscow correspondent, John Parker, cowrote a book called *The Coming Russian Boom*. (He has subsequently been rewarded for this prescience by becoming Washington bureau chief.) Recently, however, the magazine has become a doom-monger. On September 5, 1998, *The Economist* ran a picture of a disintegrating globe on the cover with the headline: "OUTLOOK FOR THE

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WORLD ECONOMY?" Inside, the prognosis was doleful: "The global economic crisis continues to deepen.... [T]he sickness that started in Asia is spreading still, claiming victims far beyond its source. Investors cannot find time to count their mounting losses, so busy are they trying to guess where the plague will strike next." There was a marked danger of "an economic setback worse than anything since the Great Depression of the '30s."

Two weeks later, after a swift recovery on Wall Street, the magazine was still predicting a dire future for emerging markets: "Even if the panic subsides ... in a global environment where shares are shaky, emerging markets will surely stay the shakiest. At a time when initial public offerings have slowed sharply on Wall Street, the idea that companies from exotic countries can easily woo investors seems far-fetched.... All in all, prospects seem grim." Throughout the fall, the drumbeats gained in momentum. China's economy was deemed shaky. By January, the cover story was: "STORM CLOUDS FROM BRAZIL." "At this point," the magazine argued, "a single question haunts investors and policymakers alike. Will a Brazilian devaluation precipitate global financial meltdown?" Its answer was hardly cheering. The idea that Brazil could weather a controlled devaluation was regarded as "too sanguine."

D'OH! SINCE THE beginning of 1999, Brazil has weathered its devaluation, and its stock market has gained close to 70 percent in domestic prices, despite a drop in economic growth. Though still with many problems, the country is now regarded as a model of how to contain an economic crisis. As for other emerging markets, India's stock prices rose 16 percent in dollar terms in the first five months of 1999, Mexico's 49 percent, Turkey's 73 percent, Russia's 74 percent, and South Africa's 22 percent. Among developing countries, only Hungary, the Czech Republic, and China have seen declines in their stock markets—and those drops were small. If you discount the growing strength of the dollar, the picture is even more impressive. Out of 25 emerging markets monitored by *The Economist*, 23 saw gains in the value of their stock markets in their own currencies, 21 of them in double digits. Meltdown? Ahem.

But what about America? Here, *The Economist* has gone even further out on a limb. In the terrible week on Wall Street before Labor Day in 1998, the Dow Jones industrial average crashed to 7,400. *The Economist* responded with something between a panic and a gloat, arguing that even 7,400 was way too high. "At these prices," the magazine editorialized, "American equities are still dear." *The Economist*'s particular scorn was reserved for technology and Internet stocks. Back on September 5, the magazine predicted a sharp downward spiral not just for "gravity-defying Internet shares such as Yahoo! and Excite" but also for more solid tech-related companies such as Microsoft, Cisco, and Dell, as U.S. businesses cut back on electronic spending. In October, the magazine reported "omens of slowdown" for the U.S. economy, where "signs of trouble are spreading." By November, with the Dow almost back to its summer highs, *The Economist* was unrepentant. Arguing that American growth was built on unsustainable consumer spending, it called for monetary tightening and a bursting of the stock market "bubble." "The risks are now high," the magazine editorialized, "that the economy will tip into some sort of a recession." Not quite. The last quarter of 1998 and the first quarter of 1999 were two of the strongest of the decade in American growth. The Dow is now comfortably in the 10,000 range.

One thing you cannot fault *The Economist* for, however, is the courage of its convictions. By January 30, the magazine ran a spectacularly alarmist cover story on Internet stocks, with the cry: "@@@gghhhh.Gon!: WHY INTERNET SHARES WILL FALL TO EARTH." It predicted not merely a correction in Amazon.com's share price, but "something much nastier." And it argued that AOL and Yahoo! would not be far behind. Of course, it is still possible that *The Economist* will be proved right in the long run, since few believe that the sky-high prices of many tech shares are fully justified by current profits (or losses). And the Internet market has seen some scary gyrations lately. But there is a statute of limitations on journalistic compassion, and *The Economist* is pressing it. On January 30, for example, it described those obsessed with buying Internet shares as "stark, staring mad." Since then, Internet shares have both rocketed and declined but are still trading near their February levels. Stark, staring mad? And *The Economist*'s prediction that the rise in Internet share prices last winter would reverse itself with "brutal rapidity" has not yet been borne out. Maybe at some point it will. As Bill Emmott jokes, "The important thing about predictions is to give a date and number but not at the same time." But, if the magazine's record on this is as good as its record on other developments in the world economy over the past few years, don't sell your Net stocks.

IF ITS ECONOMIC touch in America has been faulty, its political and cultural touch has been worse. Of course, every journalist makes a few wrong guesses, and the failure to understand the country last year was not restricted to *The Economist*. (I, for one, plead guilty.) But it seemed more at sea than most. It took a strong stand for Clinton's resignation—the cover blasted: "JUST GO"—but never seemed to acknowledge the major differences between a parliamentary democracy and a presidential system in which resignation is a very rare and traumatic event. It backed impeachment hearings but then backed away from impeachment once the conventional wisdom had turned around in January.

Throughout, the magazine seemed bewildered by the intersection of American politics and culture. It failed to understand support for Clinton and predicted, like so many others, that the only imponderable in last fall's elections was "the magnitude of [the Democratic] party's slide." In January of this year, in the midst of a booming economy and only weeks before the impeachment crisis would vanish from the news, the magazine saw a collapse in American political stability: "With every day that passes, matters get worse. The country is drifting along in a state of neglect. Legislative programmes are unheard of. Reformist debate has stopped. The political atmosphere is as poisonous as it has been since the 1960s." Only someone with no clue about America in 1999 could have written those sentences. By January, the maga-

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zine was reduced to bafflement: "If [Bill Clinton] is so ordinary, so willfully untouched by the duties and dignities of his office, there seems no reason why Americans should be so keen to keep him." Americans were therefore condescendingly portrayed on the cover as a group of teenage girls gazing at an idol under the headline: "FOOLISH LOVE."

For some reason, the magazine has drifted into other forms of anti-Americanism as well. Its economics pages regularly decry the American economy. Clive Crook, its deputy editor, sees the U.S. economy as vulnerable to renascent inflation and a stock market collapse. (In a priceless Britishism, he described NATO's Kosovo campaign in *Slate* magazine as a "frightful mess.") Other vestigial Brittery abounds, including the usual condescension to Israel. Here's a sentence from the April 10 editorial on the Balkans: "Such outrages [the expulsion and mass murder of Kosovar Albanians] have happened before—in Bosnia, Rwanda, the Soviet Union, Palestine, and all too many other places, and the ethnic cleansers have got away with their crimes." Palestine? In one English flick of the wrist, the magazine equates the foundation of Israel with Stalin's terror.

The magazine's record on the Balkans has been obtuse. Throughout 1998, its coverage was patchy and inconsistent. Sometimes predicting gloom, it also argued that the likeliest outcome was peace in Kosovo. Last October, the magazine let its readers in on the insight that "many believe that the Serbian boss might actually welcome NATO's bombs because they would give him the excuse to face down his own hawks and make concessions that he sees as inevitable." By late March, it was still peddling the theory that "Milosevic may be hoping that NATO will settle for hitting a few remote installations, causing little real damage to his army. That would allow him to channel popular anger toward the United States, and away from himself, while he capitulated on Kosovo to save the Serb nation from further harm." (The magazine, however, did urge that the West should not bank on such a scenario.)

The magazine's prescriptions for the crisis have been remarkably slithery. For a while, it campaigned for armed intervention if necessary, with ground troops. But, when the war started, the magazine argued that ground troops would not be introduced and that therefore the West should negotiate a deal with Milosevic for a partition of Kosovo. This kind of tactic, very common in *The Economist*, is described by one former staffer as classic "neck-wrench journalism." The magazine gets all the kudos for taking the high ground, while making a last-moment, and often last-paragraph, reversal. The Kosovo editorial was a classic. The cover blared over a picture of Milosevic: "DON'T LET THE ENDGAME BE HIS." The small print urged capitulation.

THEORIES ABOUT THE magazine's decline abound among its former and even current staffers. Among the most persuasive is that *The Economist* is yet another victim of the end of the cold war. Until the 1990s, it had a definite role in promoting the free-market revolution, pioneering such concepts as deregulation, privatization, and globalization. Its libertarian bent on social issues made it more palatable to liberal readers and so gave it an enviable mix. But, with the end of such an ideology, the magazine has wandered. In its pages now, there is no single driving politics. It is still fanatically in favor of free trade, but it is also increasingly anti-American. Anyone who can discern its true position on the euro should be awarded a medal. It has also lost some of the humor it once had under its previous editor, Rupert Pennant-Rea.

BUT ITS DRIFT might be better ascribed to more structural factors. The paradox of *The Economist* is that, although it is an apostle of free-market, free-trading capitalism, its own structure is more like a socialist, mercantilist dictatorship. There are no bylines and therefore no personal accountability for any single piece of text. There is no masthead. Power is closely held by the editors of the various sections, a brigade of seasoned rewriters in London, and by the editor himself, who admirably reads, rewrites, and corrects every single sentence in the magazine. And there is more than a little old boys' network in its upper ranks. When the editor, deputy editor, and New York editor didn't only go to Oxford but to the same college at Oxford—Magdalen—and when a handful of other current and former staffers attended Magdalen as well, one begins to wonder whether meritocracy is truly at work. In fact, in the last contest for the editorship, four out of five candidates went to Magdalen. One staffer recalls a recent dinner at Magdalen for *Economist* writers, where much self-congratulatory merriment ensued. This is, of course, a wonderful system for producing a single distinctive voice for which *The Economist* is rightly admired. And Magdalen College is probably the finest academic institution in the world (er, I went there, too). But it is a somewhat ineffective system for correcting internal flaws in a global magazine.

There is also no real competition in the market—no other global, weekly magazine of business, politics, and finance. *The Economist*, founded to defend free trade, has a virtual monopoly. So there are also no external mechanisms for the magazine to correct itself if it goes astray. The duller and dumber it gets, the more its circulation climbs and ad pages mount. When the magazine was a small pamphlet in London, its eccentric structure didn't matter very much and, in some respects, added to its charm. But, as it has become a vast global enterprise, the weaknesses of journalistic socialism are beginning to appear. The lack of bylines adds a weird twist. Other journalists are less likely to be envious of faceless, nameless *Economist* writers and so less likely to offer criticism or intelligent praise. A critical piece on *The Economist* comes out about once a decade (James Fallows wrote the last one in *The Washington Post* in 1991). Meanwhile, pompous plaudits are showered several times a week, and the shareholders are understandably ecstatic. The result is what Milton Friedman would predict: the flabbiness that always comes with protectionism.

Given this structure, in fact, it's a miracle that *The Economist* is as good as it is. But the truth is, it could be enormously better. Being groovy is not always the same as being good. When a magazine is as witty, as independent, and as important as *The Economist*, journalists shouldn't be the only ones hoping for improvement. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Spaced Out

TWO RECENT FILMS, one of science fiction, the other a documentary about SF fans, stirred remembrance. So, if I may....

In the decade I spent as an editor in book publishing—the 1950s—three of those years included considerable work on science fiction. The authors I dealt with were, among others, Ray Bradbury, Frederik Pohl, C.M. Kornbluth, Isaac Asimov, and Arthur C. Clarke, hardly a grungy bunch of hacks. What impressed me most about them was that they looked on science fiction not as a commercial genre but as a way to liberate the imagination. The scientific quotient (insofar as I could understand it, anyway) varied from author to author, but the pleasure in free-flying imagination was common to all the good ones. They took their writing as seriously as any writer ever did, thought of SF as a territory whose borders were wide but whose discipline was stringent, and cherished the license and energy it gave to imaginings about the near or distant future. I came in time to agree with Kingsley Amis, who said in *New Maps of Hell*, his book about the field: "One is grateful that we have a form of writing ... which is set on tackling those large, general, speculative questions that ordinary fiction so often avoids."

In science fiction in those days, one picture was certainly not worth a thousand words, if those words came from authors like the ones above and if the SF film came from a Hollywood mill. Those books were written for people who could really read, while most of the films were stitched together for kids. Even the films made from the work of such writers as Bradbury and Clarke—*Fahrenheit 451* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*—were not up to the level of their writing. In the course of time, a longer time than it now feels like, George Lucas arrived with his short film *THX 1138*, which promised films of a quality equivalent to the best science fiction. Then came the feature-length *THX 1138*, which broke that promise. The visual aspects were gratifying, the screenplay was not. Then came *Star Wars*.

This Lucas film, too, was badly unbalanced. All the creative effort had gone into the visual creations, stunning in themselves, which had then been lavished on a screenplay that seemed to have been dug out of a closet and dusted off. From my review: "The opening title tells us that the story took place on a galaxy far away 'a long time ago.' It really takes place in the science-fiction future, a place which is as fixed and fictitious for bad SF writers as the Old West is for bad Western writers." Then came two more *Star Wars* features, which were no improvement; and now there's the fourth.

Star Wars, Episode 1: The Phantom Menace (20th Century Fox) is a prelude to the three films that have already been made, the first of three promised preludes to fill a gap that has apparently tormented millions. As it whizzes through space, it settles the ancestry of Luke Skywalker (and of Darth Vader), but I can't convey the essence of the plot because I wasn't clear about it even as it was happening. (Also I was bemused by the dialogue, which fluctuates between the archaic and the snappy.) I'm not even positive who the Phantom Menace is—possibly the man with the war-paint face who duels with the two protagonists at the end—or why he is more of a phantom or a menace than others of their enemies. That final duel, not incidentally, crystallizes the whole film. It is set on the edge of a bottomless pit, into which one of the combatants is of course bound to fall. (Guess who.) That screamingly trite—and one-sided—battle is the climax toward which this 133-minute, $100-million-plus film has been moving.

Some of the visuals momentarily relieve the tedium, particularly the faces of a few characters, faces as large as bushel baskets, which are made to move with remarkable delicacy of expression. Other than that, I was mostly aware that the two protagonists—a Jedi knight and his apprentice—were meant to suggest a medieval knight and squire with obligations of honor, courage, and prowess. This hieratic sense is underscored by the appearance of the knight, played by Liam Neeson, whose beard and long hair and tunic suggest a nineteenth-century lithograph of Jesus. (Neeson, a fine actor, seems somnolent much of the time, while his junior, Ewan McGregor, tries to pump away vitally.) The implication is that those medieval qualities, which have become so sullied in our world, will be found again out there in space.

This latest *Star Wars* has the same basic effect as the other three: the sense that it was made not only for children but for the belief in many adults that they are still kids at heart. The future isn't being technologized here so much as juvenilized, trundled back to a time of innocence before we were loaded with adult problems, before we were (it is implied) tainted with sex. Thus there is a fake simplicity about this film, as with its predecessors, that is slightly sickening.

In New York, the ticket-buyers' line outside the Ziegfeld Theater began to form early on May 1 for the opening of *The Phantom Menace* on May 19. About 250 people had organized themselves, through a Website, to alternate shifts of four hours apiece. Many other theaters had similar lines.

With perfect timing we get a documentary called **Trekkies** (Paramount Classics), which explores the still-fervent adulation by thousands of the TV series "Star Trek" and its film offspring. For this documentary, Roger Nygard and colleagues have scoured far and pretty wide—in the United States, with only a quick sampling of the multiple fans abroad—and have knit the results into a weird, occasionally amusing ninety-minute film.

Here are some of Nygard's findings. Every year there are conventions of fans, where cast members frequently appear, where talks and panels are presented, where memorabilia and souvenirs are bought and sold. Further: there's a difference in the nomenclature of fans, between Trekkies and Trekkers. (I can't explain the difference adequately, but neither can anyone in the film.) There is a couple who dress their poodle like themselves, in a Trekkie outfit. There is a Florida dental office that is done up in "Star Trek" style, as are the dentist and his assistants (and not solely to attract children). A woman says that every day she finds time to think about a "Star Trek" character who enraptures her. A juror in the Whitewater case insisted on wearing her Starfleet uniform in court. The Klingon language, devised for "Star Trek," is taught in various places. *Hamlet* has been translated into Klingon, and the Bible is in process.

Trekkies (or possibly Trekkers) identify

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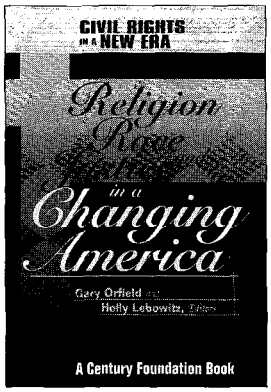
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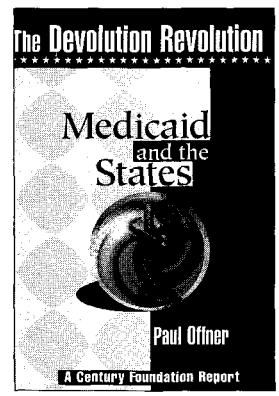

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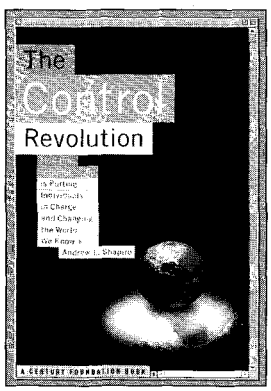

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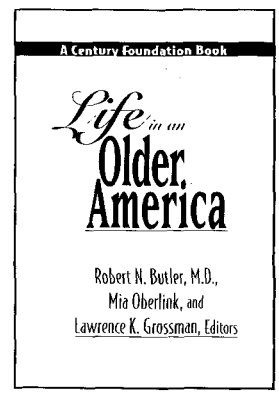

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actors with their roles. The actor who plays the doctor has had many calls for counseling. (The identification of actor with role is ancient. Remember the nineteenth-century rube in the theater audience who jumped up on the stage to sock the villain.) When these actors talk about being idealized as inhabitants of a marvelous other world, only a few of them come close to saying that they are just performers who were lucky to snare remunerative jobs in a long-running series. They believe, rightly, that their admirers do not want to glimpse the scaffolding beneath the set. There *is* such a thing as a need not to know.

I put aside all attempts at large-scale observation, all sighs about deterioration of standards through the *Star Wars/Trek* mania. I will allow myself only a single sigh: I still haven't seen an SF film as good as the best science fiction that I've read. ■

Jed Perl on Art

Dream Team

BARBARA GOODSTEIN'S landscapes are constructed of latex plaster, plywood, and bits of driftwood or other found objects. Chris Macdonald makes trucks and trains out of massive lengths of wood, some of which are leftovers—"salvage," as he calls it—from construction projects around New York City. Joel Shapiro keeps a supply of pre-cut wood in his studio, out of which he constructs his dancing, clambering figures. Joan Snyder's big symphonic paintings include papier-mâché, nails, cloth, straw, and just about anything else. David Rabinowitch makes his drawing materials himself by mixing beeswax and ground charcoal.

Each of these artists is dreaming up a technique, using unconventional materials for imaginative ends. They represent no one school or tendency, but the knockabout craftsman-like ease with which they incorporate stuff from the street, the junkpile, the lumberyard, and the hardware store—and, in addition, their unusual use of more typical art supplies—speaks volumes. In the work that each of these artists has shown in New York this season, I see an expansive approach to questions of craft, and this makes perfect sense at the end of a century that began with the experimental thunderclap of Cubist collage.

We all know that the range of materials that artists call their own has expanded to include anything and everything, from video monitors and computer printouts to the entire inventory of Kmart. Yet what is widely regarded as the forward march of technological innovation masks a deeper, century-long evolution in the studio, where the struggle to wrest meaningful forms from unconventional materials has sometimes focused and energized an artist's imagination. By now all sorts of nontraditional materials, from scrap metal to plywood, are part of a living tradition. And this non-traditional tradition is so full of paradoxes, ambiguities, and criss-crossed developments that an artist needs an especially powerful mind in order to pull things together.

To paint with oil paint is to be a painter. You slip right into the tradition; your identity is clear, even if nothing else is clear. Unconventional materials have a more amorphous freight of allusions and implications. We are always thinking about where they came from. And what artists are doing with them is not simple. Just consider the tangled evolution out of Cubist collage and assemblage, which led to both the Olympian impact of Constructivism and the psychological labyrinths of Surrealism. If that were not strange enough, consider that a contemporary sculptor who decides to use the methods and the materials of a carpenter has made a personal artistic choice that is in fact grounded in the socialist artistic ideals which were shaped by the Bauhaus. At the Bauhaus, painting and sculpture were located on a continuum with woodworking, metalwork, and weaving, almost as they might have been in a medieval workshop, where altarpieces, banners, and furniture were done by the same team.

Plywood and rusted metal can be trash or treasure. It all depends. You certainly can regard such materials as anti-art, as the ever-changing yet ever-present bugbears of Dadaist or Neo-Dadaist insurgency, which is of course by now an academy with its own rules and regulations. Then again, there are many artists who see no reason to let the people who don't give a damn about structure and sensibility get away with all the goodies that you can't buy at the art supply store. Just because junk has been made out of the junkyard is no reason to give away the junkyard. An artist can be as ardent about scrap metal as about marble. Unconventional materials inspire a more extreme sense of vocation, and a cruder one, too. They are anti-art until somebody proves otherwise.

ONLY AN ARTIST with a virtuoso exuberance can keep all of this in perspective. Joan Snyder has this kind of almost operatic aplomb, at least when she is working at the sky-high level of *Orchard* and *Oratorio*. These two mixed-media compositions, exhibited at opposite ends of a large empty room in a show called "Immediacies of the Hand: Recent Abstract Painting in New York," at Hunter College this winter, added up to the best installation of Snyder's work that has ever been seen in New York. When Snyder attaches a five-inch-deep shelf to the bottom of *Orchard*, the idea is Constructivist, even Minimalist. When she heaps the shelf with bits of earth and straw and globs of paint, she is more of an assemblagist, a sort of naturalistic Surrealist. Then Snyder unites her assemblagist's mixture of nature and culture with a canvas on which she unwinds a meandering, purple-and-green landscape of trees and rolling hills that feels Chinese or Sienese. What is so interesting is how seamlessly all this flows together, suggesting that the distance between oil paint and found object is not as far as some may have believed.

Oratorio, the other work at Hunter, is one of Snyder's vast, symphonic, everything-all-together inventions, the whole world boiled down to fifty-four square feet. There is a skull-face, a house, a sunflower, and, in the middle of it all, a bleeding heart. Given the inclusive mood that Snyder is in here, how could she not have needed to use, in addition to oil and acrylic, plastic grapes, feathers, fabric, nails, herbs, papier-mâché, paper, and more? The unselfconscious improvisational assurance with which Snyder brings all this together could probably only come from an artist who had grown up amid the anti-paint turmoil of the 1970s—and yet remained fully engaged with painting. Snyder's plastic grapes are not Pop Art grace notes; they suggest a riff on one of art's oldest stories about verisimilitude, the legend of how the Greek artist Zeuxis painted some grapes so finely that several birds came and pecked at them. By now unconventional materials are natural (second nature, maybe); and an artist can use them as the vehicle for an expedition into realms of myth, mystery, and metaphor.

Unconventional materials turn the

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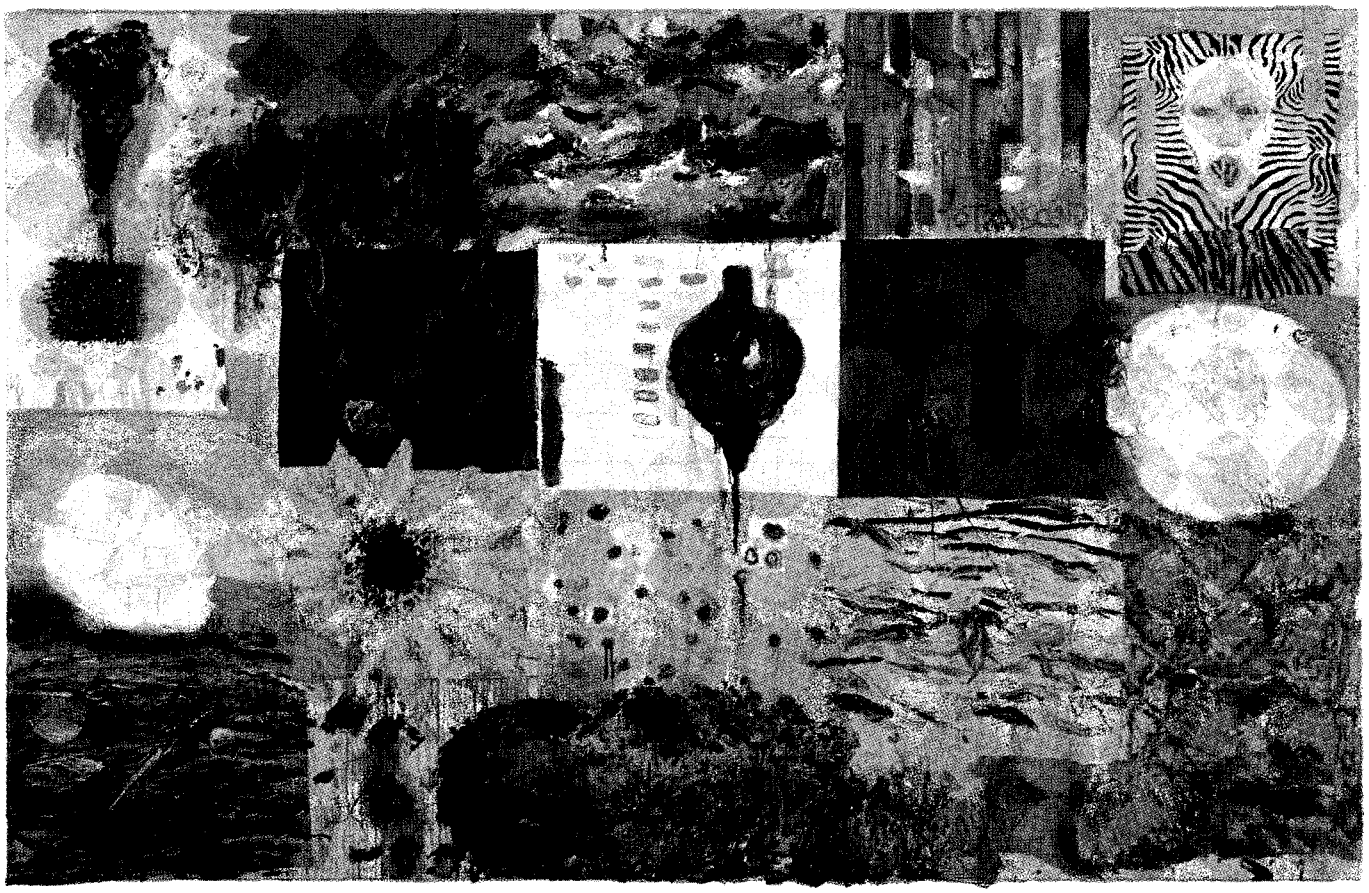

COURTESY NIELSEN GALLERY

Joan Snyder, "Oratorio," 1997

spotlight on the artist, who is a seeker and a finder, a selecter and a ferreter-out of things. Of course, we do not want the artist to become a worshipper of materials who presents four-by-eight-foot sheets of plywood or rusty fenders without comment or interpretation, expecting gallerygoers to respond almost automatically to some on-the-fly poetic power. When materials are fetishized, they become static. But how does an artist convey a dynamic feeling when no mark of brush, chisel, or hand is in evidence? I expect that the answer has something to do with an artist's ability to maneuver the materials so that they act dialectically or metaphorically.

Donald Judd is the grand extreme case. His boxes, with their elegant look-no-hands fabrication, are Constructivism *in extremis*: materialism stripped down to a singular avowal. An artist who adopts such a radical method can achieve odd, unexpected visual effects. Judd pulled an awesome delicacy out of plywood. More recently Richard Serra, with his huge, curving sheets of steel, has achieved a quirky monumentality. There is a connoisseurship of materials about what Judd and Serra do. Their dissent from traditional practices is fueled not so much by a distaste for fixed ideas of craft as by their obsession with craft. Escaping from old methods, they rush straight into newer, more elaborate techniques. If the two-by-four suggests, through the very way it is poised and juxtaposed, a particular kind of non-carving or anti-carving—well, this, too, is an idea about carving. Ultimately, unconventional materials will align themselves, like more traditional art materials, in the echo chambers and the dream spaces of tradition.

Over time, the lumberyard has developed its own lyric tradition, which is alive and well in the recent work of Chris Macdonald and Joel Shapiro. These artists intervene in the materials, but lightly. They say, geez, isn't this stuff cool—much the way Judd pointed to the loveliness of a sheet of plywood. Macdonald is a showman, a prankster, a sneak. This sculptor returns, time and again, to a small group of favorite subjects, which includes trucks and heavy construction equipment, such as cranes and backhoes, as well as trains and spaceships. Macdonald reimagines his vehicular images as idiosyncratically boxy or angular abstract forms. The results have a winning simplicity, so that it generally takes a few minutes before, with a snap of surprise, I get the allusions. It is the slowness, and then the suddenness, of the references that give the work its child's-eye aplomb and its buoyant wit.

Whether Macdonald is working with huge pieces of lumber and lengths of threaded steel rod, tiny pieces of wire and rubber—or, in his show this season at Hirschl and Adler Modern, creating two-dimensional renderings of his sculpture with oil pastels on black paper—he is doing handstands with the quotidian and turning ordinariness on its head. Macdonald's sculpture has probably never looked more wonderful than it did back in 1988, when he packed the David Beitzel Gallery, which then occupied a deep, narrow space at 113 Greene Street, with his hilariously hunky constructions. But there were echoes of that over-the-top installation this winter when Macdonald filled a patio outside Hirschl and Adler Modern's second-floor gallery with one of his gigantic wheeled contraptions, called *Sphinx #3*. Marooned on an upstairs patio on the Upper East Side, this oversized wooden gizmo was a winning absurdist presence. Macdonald's amused conjugations of truckstop, art gallery, and lumberyard are downhome (and downtown) Surrealism.

Unconventional materials can have a "what-if" dimension. Macdonald often seems to be saying, What if a boy grew up and became a sculptor but kept playing with building blocks? In his new works on paper, done with oil pastel and oil crayon, the question is: What if I use art materials with a kindergarten directness? Macdonald eschews all possibility

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of translucencies and overlaps and shadings. In the works on paper (each is titled *Construction Site*) he spins fantastic ruminations on the shapes that he presents in his sculpture. Each form has squiggly, higgledy-piggledy contours. These nervous contours recall the work of the Polish artist Wladyslaw Strzemiński, whose quirky abstractions of the 1930s and 1940s have lately received a good deal of attention. In Macdonald's new drawings, the almost numbing variety of opaque colors suggests a childhood avidity, a refusal to make distinctions. These works on paper are a bit repetitious, but they do hold in the mind. Gathered together, they have a too-close-for-comfort immediacy that does indeed suggest a child's chaotic impressions of a gigantic construction site.

Joel Shapiro, somewhat older than Chris Macdonald, has been playing around with building metaphors and asking his own kinds of what-if questions since the late 1960s. In recent years he has too often asked the same question—what if I cast a Minimalist wood figure in bronze?—and come up with a joke on old-style high art that really amounts to little more than a sleek luxury product for collectors who want something to set on a bit of lawn near the swimming pool. But this season, in a series of smaller, sketch-like, painted-wood constructions in his show at PaceWildenstein, Shapiro returned to his elegant old goofball self. He is turning pieces of lumber into herky-jerky, clambering figures. Working with five or six pieces of wood, creating blocky, wall-mounted figures that are less than two feet in any dimension, he achieves an incisive informality. He has gone back to the basics. He is thinking small and casual. On this scale, the facelessness of Shapiro's figures is not disturbing, it is liberating. The figures are flourishes, evocations of high spirits. These compositions have a musical-comedy lightness. Shapiro is showing us the angles. He is having fun. The sculpture has a card-trick wit. It's not all that much, but Shapiro doesn't seem to be pushing his luck, so it's enough. Shapiro is proving that Minimalist simplicity is a renewable asset.

IN EVERY ERA, a little something is added to an ever-evolving definition of artistic rapture. During the Middle Ages, the use of exceedingly rare materials, such as gold leaf and lapis lazuli, made people open their eyes wide. Since the Renaissance, audiences have often been held by the autographic authority of the brushstroke, which, if the artist is a master, can be worth its weight in gold. In our own time, we have seen a new kind of attention focused on found objects and non-art materials, on rusty metal, plywood, and Plexiglas. This attentiveness, by suggesting that the least likely materials can make a serendipitous impression, has inspired a new way of thinking about any and all materials, even the old-fashioned ones.

Since the 1960s, some artists have gone back into the art supply store with the expectation that they will find there some eye-opening experiences not unlike the ones that they have already had in the hardware store and the lumberyard. This idea of regarding old materials in new ways has led a number of artists who are associated with Minimalism to one degree or another to think of good old-fashioned paper—including everything from thin, inexpensive graph paper to the thickest, most richly textured varieties—as a wondrous find. Certainly Richard Serra's drawings, with their virtual lava flows of pigment, are the work of somebody who returns to paper with the steel mill in mind. A more delicate but equally deliberate angle is evident in the work that David Rabinowitch, a sculptor whose big Minimalist constructions are better known in Europe than in America, exhibited at Peter Blum this winter. In most of these works on paper, Rabinowitch is using a medium that he's developed himself, a stick or chunk made of ground charcoal and beeswax. It's as if he has taken apart a Conté crayon and then tried to put it back together in his own way.

THIS GROUP OF Rabinowitch's drawings, which is based on his observations of the elm trees in New York's Tompkins Square Park, is about verticality and angularity and massed forms. They exude a softness, a musicality, an intimacy. Rabinowitch's beeswax and charcoal combo melts and decomposes into the paper. When rubbed into luxuriously thick sheets of paper, this waxy charcoal creates effects of an unusual density, of a milky viscosity. I enjoyed looking at Rabinowitch's big drawings (often sixty by forty inches) up close. The relationship of mark to paper has an organic feeling; the grays are mysterious tones, with a loamy richness. By sometimes scratching into these tones after he's put them down, Rabinowitch further complicates his effects. The work is halfway between naturalism and Constructivism; the angular forms echo certain compositions by the Russian Constructivist artist Liubov Popova.

New materials provoke new meanings and vice versa. When Rabinowitch, an abstract sculptor, draws trees with a medium that he has dreamed up for the purpose, he is saying that an artist's relationship to his materials is as much a matter of old things seen in new ways as is his shifting relationship to subject matter. Surely the salvaged planks and lumberyard-perfect lengths of Douglas fir in Chris Macdonald's or Joel Shapiro's work suggest a very different view of wood from the carved surfaces of earlier centuries. And I don't think there is any question but that these shifts parallel changes in our understanding of the tree, of the landscape, of nature itself. The way that, in the lumberyard, we see wood apart from trees is not entirely different from the way that, looking at certain works of modern art, we see artists attempting to isolate the tree from older landscape conventions.

When Courbet painted *The Oak at Flagey* in 1864, the tree had already begun to detach from its surroundings. This tree of Courbet's is a singularity—a found object; it is no longer an element in a landscape composition which includes a foreground, a middleground, and a background. Courbet wants to get at the strangeness of a tree, he wants to see it anew. And this new isolation of the object is in some ways related to a new sense of materials, to Courbet's manipulation of paint with palette knife and, maybe, sponges and rags—which are found tools. Fifty years later, in Mondrian's paintings, the tree is further alienated from nature, becoming in the process an embodiment of the geometry of the canvas and a portal leading to abstraction.

THE STORY does not end there. The tree that had become an abstraction can also be reintegrated into the landscape, as it is in the relief sculptures that Barbara Goodstein exhibited in her remarkable show at the Bowery Gallery this spring. The insistent unconventionality of this artist's technique, which involves building up mounds, ridges, and washes of white latex plaster on black-painted plywood boards and then adding found materials as grace notes, is an extraordinary way of acknowledging all that the landscape has been through in this century. Goodstein's work combines Constructivist techniques with a painterly sensibility, and that is only the beginning of the surprises and the reversals. She uses white plaster to evoke the weight of tree trunks and branches. She uses black painted plywood to suggest earth and sky. The work has a stark, high-contrast look. And the pared-down elegance of the means only makes the artist's touch more immediately evident. There is a surprising warmth to these compositions, in which the eccentricity of the technique is wedded to a classical visual assurance.

Goodstein's landscapes are meditations on specific places: a church and surrounding buildings in upstate New York; the

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way Catskill hills settle into the horizon; a huge, lush willow tree that dwarfs a cozy little house. Her feeling for the rhythms and spatial complexities of the scenes is informed by a magnificently refined sense of how earlier artists, generally painters, have engaged with related motifs. Since her methods are so far from painting, however, Goodstein manages to approach the landscape tradition from her own sly vantage point. The unfurling ribbons of plaster that define the horizon in a series of exaggeratedly horizontal images bring into landscape some of the calligraphic playfulness of Calder's airborne arabesques.

These are the most elegantly discombobulated landscapes ever done. Goodstein has an authoritative feeling for the inherent stresses of a rectangle, for the way that weights and counterweights activate a surface. Her images are telegraphic, emblematic. She also works naturalistic wonders with the relative densities of the plaster, sometimes treating it almost translucently to evoke light and shade and soft masses of foliage. And the bits of wood and other found objects that she scatters across the surface are like exclamation points; they are things found in the landscape and now, metaphorically, returned to it.

Barbara Goodstein has been exhibiting in New York since the early '80s. She is the most original sculptor of her generation. In her new work I feel the thunderclap of Cubism, and I register much that has happened since Cubism, too. As she places a bit of driftwood or a child's bright red building block or a triangle of patterned green cloth into her austerely lyrical landscapes, she is evoking the whole mad, marvelous treasure hunt of modern art. Goodstein has taken materials most readily associated with the construction site and found objects that you might pick up at the scrappy edges of a modern city, and out of such unlikely elements she has created a new pastoral mode. As Goodstein maneuvers her unconventional materials, lovely, quirky daydreams unfold. In the New York galleries this season, I have found equally quirky daydreams unfolding in the work of Chris Macdonald, Joan Snyder, Joel Shapiro, and David Rabinowitch; and even as these artists dream of making art in an entirely different way, they find themselves returning to some of the very first ambitions that any artist ever had. ■

The Final Pollution

By SHERWIN B. NULAND

The Nazi War on Cancer by Robert N. Proctor

(Princeton University Press, 380 pp., $29.95)

THE NEWS OF last month's reopening of the Reichstag building, sixty-six years after its ruination by fire, sent a small chill up more than a few aging spines. The stable parliamentary democracy that is today's Germany can hardly be faulted for acceding to its own understandable yearning for symbolic continuity with eight centuries of a representative legislature—the imperial Diet goes back to 1100—or its nostalgia for an edifice erected during a period of unbridled cultural energy. Still, many of us cannot but be assailed by the obvious memories associated with that historic place and the events surrounding its near-destruction: the birth-pangs of fascism, the first reports of terror in the streets, and finally the incendiary pretext that ushered in the long night of the most destructive dictatorship the world has ever known.

And then there are the words. Germany is alone among nations in preserving the language of empire for the name of its legislative body. Chancellor Schroeder asserted in his opening address that there is no equation between the retained use of "*Reich*" and current or future reality, but some of us are not completely reassured by his facile certitude. The word reverberates. Perhaps our unease would be less were we not confronted with another verbal reminder of horror that his government has chosen to keep in place. Emblazoned on the façade over the tall pillars fronting the refurbished building is the old proclamation that in a bygone time stirred so many nationalistic hearts: *Dem Deutschen Volke*, "To the German People."

In restoring a building, anguished emotions have also been restored. To men and women of a certain age throughout the world, the sight or the sound of the word "*Volk*" brings back an entire panoply of painful recollections. Who, growing up in the 1930s or the early 1940s, can forget the horrifying uses to which the ancient Germanic concept of *Volk* was put, in the name of racial purity, ethnic hatred, persecution, and murder? To Hitler's votaries and their generations of like-minded predecessors, the German *Volk* was more than a people. It was an imperious familial community of tribal origin, held indissolubly together by ties of unblemished blood and an attachment to the sanctity of the *Vaterland*. Its basis was the myth of a lustrous history and the glorification of the imagined heroic sagas of the *Mittelalter*, the near-primitive and therefore noble early Middle Ages of Wagnerian confabulation.

The notion of *Volk* was, in Hitler's words, "a blood-conditioned entity" and "the sacred collective egoism which is the nation." Addressing the members of the displaced Reichstag on January 30, 1937, Hitler proclaimed his plan: "The main plank in the National Socialist program is to abolish the liberalistic concept of the individual and the Marxist concept of humanity and to substitute for them the *Volk* community, rooted in the soil and bound together by the bond of its common blood." The German *Volk* was the Master Race, disdainful of lesser tribes and murderously contemptuous of the impurities of surrounding cultures. Its assumed existence was the arrogant justification for some of the most repulsive crimes ever perpetrated in the name of ideology. Lofty oratory did not disguise its inherent rot.

ONE NEED NOT be a Freudian to intuit that an obsessional insistence on purity is a reaction to a deep sense of uncleanness. One need not even subscribe to the theory of unconscious motivation to perceive a national phenomenon in Nazism that figuratively reeked of the fear of contamination. To understand the details of Robert Proctor's illuminating analysis of the interaction between science and national neurosis, it is only necessary to recall that cancer, in the 1930s, was seen by the laity and by many doctors as a disease likened to degeneration and defilement, a disease that approached by stealth and killed by treachery, a disease tinged with shame, a disease not to be disclosed.

The Nazi aim was to detoxify the *Volk*—to free it of pollutants from without and within, and to create what Proctor calls "an exclusionist sanitary utopia." Ridding the country of cancer and carcinogens was likened to ridding the country of Jews and other undesirables: "People saw the [Nazi] movement as a source

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of rejuvenation—in public health and in other spheres as well. People looked to Nazism as a great and radical surgery or cleansing." *Der Mann* in the street shared this attitude with his doctor. Like their leader, "Germany's physician-führers were less concerned about the health of individuals than about the vigor of the 'race,' the so-called folk community (*Volksgemeinschaft*)." This is National Socialism, in other words, as a great obsessive-compulsive disorder, the Third Reich with OCD.

BUT THERE WAS a lot more than national neurosis at work in the Nazi war on cancer, and surprisingly much of it was valid. In the general condemnation of the uses to which science and particularly medicine were put during the Hitlerian period, there is a tendency to overlook the great heritage of the German-speaking researchers not only in the Fatherland, but in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland. Despite being substantially weakened by World War I and its aftermath, the German scientific establishment had long maintained a very high level of productivity. Although it is difficult to agree with Proctor's uncharacteristic exaggeration that during the Weimar period "German medicine and science were the envy of the world," there is no doubt that he is correct when he states that "Nazism took root in the world's most powerful scientific culture."

The nation and its Germanophone outposts in nearby countries were steeped in the atmosphere of scientific investigation. When the study of human biology reached a point in the mid-nineteenth century where the necessity for detailed observation, measurement, and painstaking record-keeping became paramount, meticulous German minds were perfectly prepared for the challenge. Not only that, but liberalizing trends in the universities as a consequence of the revolutions of 1848 resulted in a system in which free and wide-open competition meant that faculty posts were occupied by only the most highly qualified professors. This could be said of no other country. The goodly number of well-supported state schools assured ample numbers of talented graduates, who then went on to be creative in the laboratory and popular in the classroom. Considering the devastation that would be wrought by the Nazification of the universities in the 1930s, it is ironic that the term "academic freedom" made its first appearance in the German motto of *Lehrfreiheit und Lernfreiheit*, freedom of teaching and freedom of learning, which originated in the post-1848 period.

Research thrived after that time, as investigative opportunities multiplied and each new discovery opened up more avenues in the universities and the clinics. A veritable golden age of medical progress followed, lasting until the Great War slowed it but hardly stopped it. Until then and even after, young physicians all over the world studied German and flocked to the many great centers where the grand *Geheimraten* had established a system of education and research without peer in the long history of Western medicine. It was a heady time, and its heritage was still very much in evidence on that cold February night in 1933 when the Reichstag fire gave the new Chancellor precisely the excuse he needed to assume the emergency powers that suspended constitutional rights and launched his dictatorship. From then on, it would be as Hans Frank, Germany's leading lawyer, wrote in the *Volkischer Beobachter* in 1936: "Our Constitution is the will of the Führer."

By then, half of the world's Nobel prizes had been won by Germans; almost all of the great pharmaceutical houses were German or German-Swiss; and, most telling, no physician or researcher could be fully conversant with contemporary medical practice or theory without a reading knowledge of German or at least access to good translations. By 1933 it was no longer as powerful as it had been, but still the German influence over medicine was very much in evidence.

NO WONDER, THEN, that the association between cigarettes and lung cancer should have been discovered not by English-speaking researchers in the 1950s, as has been believed by most medical historians, but by Germans in the late 1920s and 1930s. And no wonder that Germans were the first or among the first to recognize so many of the diseases of workplace exposure, and to legislate protective measures against them. That the industrial dangers of asbestos, chromium, arsenic, silicon, aniline dyes, and radioactivity were first perceived and documented was largely to the credit of German physicians and epidemiologists.

Authorities on the subject of tobacco-induced lung cancer invariably point to a series of seminal papers published in American and British journals in 1950 and several years thereafter, in which the cause-and-effect relationship was identified by epidemiological and experimental studies. The names of Ernest Wynder, Evarts Graham, E. Cuyler Hammond, Richard Doll, and A. Bradford Hill are a virtual Who's Who of the acclaimed discoverers. It is one of Robert Proctor's contributions to medical history that he has documented the priority of the Germans, first in a scholarly review in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* in 1997 and now in *The Nazi War on Cancer*. "The startling truth," he writes,

> is that it was actually in Nazi Germany that the link was originally established. German tobacco epidemiology was, in fact, for a time, the most advanced in the world, as were many other aspects of the anti-tobacco effort. Support for tobacco hazards research was strong among the Nazi medical elite; indeed it was in Germany in the late 1930s that we first find a broad medical recognition of both the addictive nature of tobacco and the lung cancer hazard of smoking.

WITHOUT TAKING ANY of the well-deserved credit from Wynder and the others, whose studies were much larger and in the long run proved to be the definitive ones, Proctor provides ample documentation of his claim. As early as 1929, Fritz Lickint, a physician in Chelmnitz, published statistical evidence of the association of the malignancy with cigarettes, and colleagues followed this with one paper after another in various German medical journals. Lickint went on to become the most vocal of the country's opponents of smoking, culminating in his publication of the 1,100-page *Tabak und Organismus* (*Tobacco and the Organism*) in 1939.

It was a monumental work, produced in partnership with two government-sponsored groups, the Reich Committee for the Struggle Against Addictive Drugs and the German Antitobacco League. Astonishing to today's reader is the accuracy of the long list of problems attributed to tobacco, some of which have needed to be rediscovered in recent years. As Proctor recounts:

> Surveying eight thousand publications worldwide, the author blamed tobacco for cancers all along the *Rauchstrasse* ("smoke alley")—lips, tongue, lining of the mouth, jaw, esophagus, windpipe, and lungs. Tobacco was an instigator not just of cancer but of arteriosclerosis, infant mortality, ulcers, halitosis, and dozens of other maladies. Tobacco was a powerful drug: tobacco addiction he characterized as *Nikotinismus* (or, more properly, *Tabakismus*), and the people so afflicted as *Nikotinisten* (or *Tabakisten*). He also compared tobacco addicts to morphine addicts and made a convincing argument that "passive smoking" (*Passivrauchen*—he seems to have coined the term) posed a serious threat to nonsmokers.

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Not a single one of those claims has proved to be erroneous. One can almost visualize Lickint at work, his precise Teutonic mind poring over the data as he extracted it bit by bit from the exacting analysis of the eight thousand publications. All the evidence was there, but only a German working in Hitler's Third Reich took the pains to unearth it. It would be decades before the medical world accepted or acted on some of the information that became available in Lickint's masterful opus. Proctor attributes this long period of inertia to "both the conservatism built into postwar epidemiology and the postwar political disregard for all things German, the *stigma* of Nazism." The lesson in this is hardly hidden.

IN THE POWERFUL HANDS of the State, the documentation provided by Lickint and the many other medical scientists delving into cancer etiologies could be used to mount an intense campaign, primarily against tobacco. The *kampf*'s first-line assault weapon was a storm of propaganda, by means of public lectures, congresses, books, magazine articles, and compulsory anti-tobacco reading in all elementary schools. Beginning in 1938, the government did not hesitate to issue ordinances much like those to which we have in recent years become accustomed in our own country. It was forbidden to smoke, for example, on the grounds of the post office, many workplaces, hospitals, government offices, and certain other public spaces. SS Reichsführer Himmler forbade police officers in his own organization from smoking on duty. Tobacco was banned on all civic transport in 1944, expanding the jurisdiction of similar decrees that had previously existed in sixty of Germany's cities.

Beginning in 1941, restrictions on tobacco advertising were increased. Smoking was not to be portrayed as healthful or even harmless, nor were advertisements for tobacco to be directed at sportsmen, automobile drivers, or women. Athletes, pilots, and similar masculine types upon whom young men might model themselves were not to be shown smoking, nor were women. Tobacco advertising was not to appear on billboards, in sports facilities, or on public transportation, nor was it to be sent by mail or accepted for publication in the text sections of newspapers or magazines.

In that same year, the government provided 100,000 Reichsmarks to build the Institute for Tobacco Hazards Research at the University of Jena. Karl Astel, one of the many physician members of the SS, was chosen as its director. Astel was a fanatic known for declaring opposition to tobacco a "National Socialist duty." His assertion was consistent with the words of the original proposal for the Institute's founding, which stated that abstinence was "as important as Aryan ancestry." The author of that proposal, the Thuringian Gauleiter Fritz Sauckel, would be executed after the war, following conviction by the Nuremberg Tribunal for his role as the Plenipotentiary for the Mobilization of Labor, a lofty title for the fiendish role he played in the forced conscription of millions of German and foreign workers.

At the two-day conference celebrating the opening of the Institute, Johann von Leers, editor of the rabidly anti-Semitic journal *Nordische Welt*, accused "Jewish capitalism" of being a major factor in the spread of smoking throughout Europe. And Hitler himself was also heard from. The Führer greeted the many assembled dignitaries via telegram, wishing them "good luck in your work to free humanity from one of its most dangerous poisons." A reformed heavy smoker himself, Hitler was known for his personal aversion to tobacco. He, too, had become a zealot in the matter, to the point of awarding a gold watch to any of his close associates who gave up the foul habit.

ALTHOUGH NOT AS EXTENSIVE as the war on tobacco, the Nazi effort against other industrial carcinogens and chemical hazards was no less resolute. Occupational safety regulations to guard the health of German workers against radiation and such dangerous substances as asbestos, chromates, nitro-compounds, lacquers, varnishes, and other chemicals began to be promulgated in 1936, and multiplied in number throughout the period. The ever-widening use of diagnostic X-rays weighed particularly heavily on the Nazi mind, for fear of possible effects on the national heredity from its tendency to cause genetic mutations. As early as 1935, the racial monthly *Volk und Rasse* (*Folk and Race*) issued a warning to physicians that even tiny levels of exposure might result in damage to the precious Aryan germplasm. All in all, the Third Reich's war on cancer was another Nazi war fiercely fought.

When we contemplate the story of medicine under the Nazis, thoughts naturally turn to the 350,000 Germans sterilized in the name of racial purity, the 200,000 mentally or physically handicapped put to death, and the more than a thousand concentration camp inmates who died during the course of the notorious experiments renowned for their cruelty and their violation of even the most fundamental principles of medical ethics. We remember how Nazi doctors eagerly participated in the Holocaust. Proctor has written extensively about the participation of

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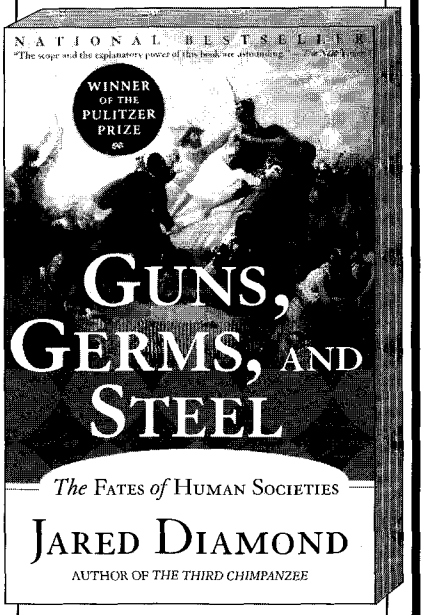

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physicians in the development of racial science and National Socialist policy in *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, which appeared in 1988. These are not matters easily ignored, nor should we try to ignore them. They should be kept in the forefront of our minds. Yet it behooves us also to remember that, regardless of its employment for the purposes of evil, normative and even valuable medical science did not go out of existence in Hitler's Reich. We have discounted it to our disadvantage. Studies untinged by moral depravity, by the savagery of human experimentation, did proceed during those dreadful years, and there is value in knowing about them.

In the extraordinarily high quality of Fritz Lickint's work can be found this most important lesson of *The Nazi War on Cancer*. The condemnation of the German medical profession under the Nazis is thoroughly deserved, but it should nevertheless be known that a great tradition of medical progress did not suddenly evaporate because it came under the vicious influence of fascist ideology. Useful and even inspired work continued to be done, even if much of it was instigated or distorted in the name of the state's political priorities.

TWO JUXTAPOSED FACTS here present themselves: large numbers of German physicians voluntarily joined the Nazi party, and the Nazi war on cancer was unparalleled among nations for its vigor and determination. The second fact emerges, of course, from the first. As Proctor appropriately observes, "The Nazi war on tobacco shows that what most people would concede to be 'good' science can be pursued in the name of antidemocratic ideals. It is therefore not enough to speak only of the suppression or even survival of science; we have to see how dictatorial ideals worked to inspire and guide the science and policies of the time." Proctor rightly emphasizes that the identification of carcinogens was fostered "by a national political climate stressing the virtues of racial hygiene and bodily purity."

And here we return to the concept of cleansing the *Volk* of contaminants. It is in this connection that the term *Gleichschaltung* appears, and must be properly understood. Although its technical meaning is "political coordination," Proctor, to help the reader more thoroughly understand its implications under Hitler, defines it as "unification and purification," and elsewhere more directly as what it meant in actual practice, which was "Nazification." In his view, Nazism can be seen as a vast hygienic experiment, detoxifying the body politic as though in paranoid fear of destructive pollutants and parasites that have invaded its Aryan sanctity.

These were not only Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, the retarded, the mentally ill, and the genetically inferior, but also communists, liberals, and all manner of political and intellectual opponents. Radiation, occupational carcinogens, drugs, alcohol, perceived nutritional hazards, artificial colorings and flavorings: all of these were contaminants to enervate the *Volk*. This officially sanctioned paranoia went beyond mere striving for health; it had to do with the temple that was the uniquely German body, the temple that must be protected against the insidious creepings of the silent crab that is cancer. "*Dein Korper gehort dem Führer*," "Your body belongs to the Führer," proclaimed the propaganda posters, and the Führer knows what is best for it. Hitler famously neither drank nor smoked, and he ate meat—which he called "the flesh of dead animals" and "cadavers" (meat broth was "corpse tea")—only on rare occasions.

THE THEME OF contamination by undesirable elements, human or otherwise, permeated much of the medical thinking and the public education of the Nazi era, and was considered useful as a means of illustrating disease and urging prevention while making a political statement. Propagandists associated smoking with Jews, blacks, Gypsies, loose women, jazz, and degenerates of all sorts. Proctor describes a radiotherapy lecture in Frankfurt in 1936, conducted by the X-ray specialist and SS officer Dr. Hans Holfelder, in which cancer cells were depicted as Jews, while the healing rays were stormtroopers.

In a well-known lithograph by Ivo Saliger, which I have examined in the Yale collection, the invading cancer in a beautifully formed and all but naked young woman's breast is being destroyed by the powerful X-ray beam, as the black-hooded skeleton of death cringes in fear. The radiologist supervising the process of purification bears an uncanny resemblance to a pudgy Heinrich Himmler. Saliger's painting is an unabashed portrayal of the Third Reich rescuing virtuous and lovely Aryan womanhood from the depraved *Auslander*—the malignant outsider so despised in Hitlerian theology, who would enter her body, like a cancer, to violate its racial purity.

Proctor has produced a much-needed corrective to our understanding of the Third Reich's medical culture, which we have become accustomed to castigating as though it were a monolith, and a sudden departure from an illustrious scientific past. It was neither. For historians, for ethicists, for physicians, and for thoughtful people in general, it can be instructive to ponder this most extreme instance ever witnessed of "how the routine practice of science can so easily coexist with the routine exercise of cruelty." Between the lines of Proctor's book is the unstated message that—like so many excesses of the Nazi regime—there is in this one a hint of ourselves. When we consider the many examples of heedless neglect of the rights of experimental subjects that have come to light in our own country, we would do well to remember the German doctors.

NEITHER IN QUANTITY nor in quality have our society's violations of human decency so much as approached the scale on which they were perpetrated under Hitler; and yet we are not without blemish. The worst of the German medical transgressors rationalized their sadistic experiments by believing that they were designed for the greater good, and were in any event being conducted on people lower on the scale of human worth than those they were meant to benefit. As the defense at the Doctors' Trial at Nuremburg in 1947 was quick to point out, however, members of the Allied nations—the United States, France, and Britain among them—had also been guilty of performing dangerous experiments on prisoners without their consent.

Since then, other such and similar instances have been revealed. Even today, there remain questions about the degree to which experimental volunteers are informed before signing on to adventures in biomedical research. These problems did not originate with the Nazis. In condemning them, we would do well to remember our obligations to one another. Those of us who are physicians would do well to remember the full range of our obligations to the sick who come to us to be healed. *This* is a kind of purification from which our society would surely benefit.

Yet the overt and intended theme of Proctor's book is something else entirely. Throughout the book, the series of events being described can be seen to build up a massive case for the inevitable conclusion to which Proctor steadily leads his reader by the judicious insertion of carefully constructed commentary. Whether in the interest of racial purity or the purity of science, physicians and medical researchers during the Nazi period made discoveries and instituted reforms that continued in the great tradition of healing established by the Hippocratics in ancient Greece and brought to a peak of accomplishment in their own country during the late nineteenth century. That many of the selfsame physicians brought their contributions into the public arena with a political and even racist agenda in mind; that

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many of them were either Nazis or subscribed to the cruelties of the Nazi regime; that they willingly and even enthusiastically allowed their innovations to be used for purposes of persecution and even murder—all of these seemingly complicating factors only add up to the author's straightforward and basically elementary summing-up, a conclusion with which there can be no disagreement given the massive weight of the evidence that he provides: "the Nazification of German science and medicine was more complex than is commonly imagined."

This brief and seemingly simplistic statement is a clear demonstration of the most valuable purpose to be found in the never-ending return to sources and the constant rewriting of history. The discovery of hitherto unknown findings and the repeated analysis of the old may bring us no closer to truth. Nor may it even help to elucidate what Leopold von Ranke, the greatest of the nineteenth-century German historians, called *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*—how it really was. But there is one thing that the critical study of historical sources *is* guaranteed to accomplish: subjecting the same ground to one after another evaluation will acquaint posterity with the difficulty of making unalloyed judgments about the past or its participants. The profusion of large and small events and the never-ending interplay of influences create a complexity that defies later reconstruction or a closure of the book on a period understood. All that we of later generations can do is to keep trying, and recognize the incompleteness of the lessons that we learn from the study of the past. And that is the lasting message of the historian. ■

Show Me the Money

By David S. Landes

The Lexus and the Olive Tree by Thomas L. Friedman

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 394 pp., $27.50)

This lively book of cryptic title reminds me of a cheery song I once sang, with refrain as follows:

Ya gotta accent-uate the positive
Elim-i-nate the negative
Latch on to the affirmative
Don't mess with Mr. In-between.

Thomas L. Friedman believes in, approves of, and enthuses for globalization. He points out that it is an older story than most people realize, going back to the nineteenth century and railways, steamers, telegraph, and cable. (I would say that it goes back to the sixteenth century and the age of discovery and transoceanic voyages.) Yet these earlier openings are as nothing compared to today's metamorphosis. In Friedman's words: "If the first era of globalization shrank the world from a size 'large' to a size 'medium,' this era of globalization is shrinking the world from a size 'medium' to a size 'small.'" And to emphasize the role of rapid (quasi-instantaneous) communication in all this, he notes that a three-minute phone call from New York to London cost $300 (1996 dollars) in 1930. Today it costs 36 cents. Yet even now, in some countries, such long-distance calls have to be made by appointment, because there is not enough capacity, and also because it is an opportunity for telephone bureaucrats to push people around.

Still, as Friedman emphasizes, you have to get with it or be left behind. The laggards (he calls them "turtles") really have no choice. They cannot ask the driver of the juggernaut to slow down; they cannot plead, wheedle, negotiate, or bribe; there simply is no driver. Globalization, he tells us, is not a phenomenon, not a passing trend. It is "the overarching international system shaping the domestic politics and foreign relations of virtually every country." It involves "the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before—in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before."

Friedman should know. Thanks to the airplane and his job as columnist for *The New York Times*, he gets around the world farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper (well, maybe not cheaper) than any of his predecessor journalists. And he loves it, his personal globalization. The book is full of breathless tales of triumphant meetings, revelatory confessions, claims of conversion, and promises of resistance, in small places and large, capitals and backwoods. Many of these anecdotes are trivial and scarcely relevant, but the best are illuminations. One of my favorites is the story of a Russian hotel with elevator buttons numbered 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 2. The builder forgot to put in a second-floor button, and then he tacked it on as an afterthought. It worked; you just had to find it. This, mind you, was in a secret military-industrial complex: Russian high-tech. If I were they, I would not use any missiles. Just sell them, to enemies maybe.

The new fast-style mode of production and distribution runs slam into old habits of control and direction, whether by the state or by private coalitions. This is why globalization is the source of a new division of power and performance comparable in magnitude and momentousness to the now obsolete cold war. On one side, the winners: get-go kids, full of beans and money, trying to multiply their fortunes by deals, investments, and market coups. Also those countries that have come to terms with the new ways, opened their markets, loosened the controls. On the other side, the losers: the turtles, the control freaks, the unprepared, the fraidy-cats. Also the countries that cannot handle the new ways, that want to protect entrenched positions and vested interests and prefer taking to making.

Friedman rates countries *en passant* by their readiness and their ability to learn new ways. He likes the United States and the new Britain, but if France were a stock, he says, he would sell it. Why so? Because France has prohibited the use of encryption technologies on the Internet. France is one of those countries that cannot live with a freewheeling business realm, especially one that tries to keep secrets from the state. But I can think of many more reasons why France has so long striven against globalization. The very use of the Internet has been delayed in France by the government's commitment to the state-developed and state-run minitel system. This is a country ever determined to go its own way, to develop its own kind of straitjacket, partly because it sees itself as playing a special role of example and leadership, partly because the country's best talent has been formed by and for the state. Private is by definition subordinate. On the other

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hand, just because so much intelligence is at the service of the state, France has usually found ways to stay (almost) with the frontrunners. If France were a stock, I wouldn't sell it. I would buy it at today's price and hold against the prospect of capital gain.

NOW IT GOES without saying that big, fast profits entail, or should entail, greater risks. That is only fair. But that is not the way things work. The present arrangements of market support (even the best of markets has its ups and downs, just as the best of players has his losses) rest finally on the credit of the rich countries. This means in effect the United States, via such bodies (technocratic committees) as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; and these in turn are designed to prevent and to thwart market justice, at least for those big and politically connected lenders whom one wants to keep in the game. As a result, much of the first aid serves to pull fat-cat chestnuts out of the fire. Not an encouragement to wisdom and prudence.

The result is precarious and vulnerable globalization—a rush to riches by what Friedman calls the Electronic Herd. (He likes cute names.) Such herd-like behavior invites to mistakes, crisis, panic, losses, waste. Friedman does not do enough with these negative aspects, partly because he sees them as trumped by greed (gambler-investors are incurable), partly because Friedman is, at least in this book, an incurable optimist. He may well be right. His essential message is that one tries to go with the winners. The losers will not be remembered. This is much easier to do if one earns a good salary and has a good pension down the road.

Governments are different. Like France, not every country is ready to buy into the game. Friedman points out that some may want to go only part of the way (India, Egypt); others will try the Golden Straitjacket (another Friedmanian term) but then take it off (Malaysia, Russia); still others may think they can stay out of it because of natural, unearned wealth (the oil countries of the Middle East); and others reject it entirely as a source of corruption and an insult to faith or national character (North Korea, Sudan, Afghanistan, and, I would add, Burma). These last dissenters can have the consolations of virtuous poverty, but poor they will be. Only the players can attract the income that they need for growth.

If they get it, can they keep it? This is another aspect of reality that Friedman scants. He is well aware that the "herd" is not infallible, that it is anxious and impulsive. But if the herd is so mobile, and the means of communication are so rapid, what country can rely on performance? A small misstep, and everyone will dash for the exits. But Friedman says, no, the herd will recognize good government and good economic management. From his mouth to God's ear.

Malaysia is the prime example of a country that has thrown off the Golden Straitjacket. Even more, it has told the Electronic Herd to get lost, unless it is willing to accept constraints on capital mobility; and it has seasoned its rejection with ugly epithets about a Jewish conspiracy. Now, I have no use for Mahathir's balderdash about a Semitic plot (he would do better to look out for other varieties of Semitism); but I can well understand his desire to tame the mustangs by constraining capital movements.

Try a counterfactual. It is clear that investors will send their money just about anywhere if the prospects are good and the government is reliable. So what if some kinds of investors will be deterred: the high-flyers, the in-and-outers? A well-run chip manufacturer on the island of Penang can probably get the money that it needs. Most of Friedman's Electronic Herd, including the big banks, the hedge funds, the unholy rollers, may well refrain. So much the worse for them. And is Malaysia the worse off for their absence? Friedman thinks so. I'm not so sure. No more huge skyscrapers? No more nervous capital? So much the better.

FRIEDMAN, ONE CAN SEE, is an unregenerate optimist. He loves modernity. He actually thinks that the replacement of receptionists and operators by voice mail and impersonal, automatized choices (press 1) is a gain. He should ask the callers. And he has a warm eye for change. I like the story of his visit to the Chinese countryside and the houses that grow with success. (I am reminded of my own visit to a Turkish beach around 1990, where I observed a shrouded Muslim grandmother, a prosperous mother in a one-piece suit, and a granddaughter in a bikini.) The world is changing, and for Friedman, this is a potentially universal theme or scenario and all for the good.

Friedman knows that one kind of change does not equal another. Technology is not impartial. Nor is every society equally well endowed for this kind of money play (or play money). Friedman is rightly impressed by the nodes of success: northern Italy, Tel Aviv, Shanghai, South Korea, Beirut, Bangladore (India). Put in the Internet, spread the people around, and you have, he says, a "cybertribe"—a group combining "speed, creativity, entrepreneurial talent and global networking." Britain is another go-getter. Gone the old, folkloric sources of pleasure and pride: "village cricket, tea and scones, baronial castles, Beefeaters, grouse hunts on heathery moors, ceremonial celebrators in wigs and tights, tepid amber ale and Union Jacks fluttering.... In are images of pulsing telecommunications, global business transactions, information technologies, buccaneering entrepreneurs, bold architecture, cheeky advertising, daring fashion, Britpop music, nightclubbing." Cool Britannia rather than Rule, Britannia! This from a colleague of Friedman's on *The New York Times*.

It sounds good, but it is only partly true. The old ways are still there, and many Britons cherish them, while others retire to them. Tepid drinks still vex foreign visitors. Electric current still fluctuates. Plumbing leaves much to be desired, owing to the strange notion that one mustn't mix hot and cold water in the same faucet. It may well be that the better-than-average performance of the British economy in recent years reflects a salutary reaction to earlier years of stagnation and contraction. Britain is catching up. Way to go! But it *has* a way to go.

WHAT ABOUT THE others? Friedman exhorts and warns, but he does not do enough with the inequality of nations and tribes. It is those inequalities that promote resistance to the new dispensation. Friedman sees globalization as global, universal. It would be that. But I see it as selective; unavoidable maybe, a rough and uneven passage. It is certainly not a final answer.

Take Japan, once a most impressive performer. In the last decade, however, Japan has slowed considerably, even suffered some years of negative growth. Some are ready to write the country off as incurably addicted to traditional ways. (Who would have dreamed of that twenty years ago?) A few Japanese enterprises meet Friedman's requirements for openness, but most of them want the state to protect them from outside competition. And the state responds. No country is so clever as Japan in conjuring up non-tariff barriers to trade. Meanwhile these firms, nominally public companies, are anything but public. Shareholders are welcome for their money but not for their opinions. The firms appoint the old men to the board and respond to trouble by pulling in the oars. The worst sector in this regard is probably banking, which lends to people it thinks it knows and then wastes money trying to keep their heads above water. Friedman wants the banks to

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liquidate the failures and the state to crack down on the banks. This is not easy. Banks, after all, are a precious resource. Where will Japanese politicians go when it's pay-off time?

FRIEDMAN HAS A "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention." This asserts that "no two countries that both had McDonald's had fought a war against each other since each got its McDonald's." This sounds funny, frivolous, or accidental; but he argues quite seriously that any country with a big enough middle class to support a chain of McDonald's does not want to go to war. The people prefer to wait in line for burgers. Now, I don't know if there are McDonald's franchises in Yugoslavia. Or if wars are fought with the consent of the people who wait in line for burgers.

Friedman himself realizes that "globalization does not end geopolitics." But today's version of globalization, he writes, "with its economic integration, digital integration, its ever-widening connectivity of individuals and nations, its spreading of capitalist values and networks to the remotest corners of the world and its growing dependence on the Golden Straitjacket and the Electronic Herd ... makes for a much stronger web of constraints on the foreign policy behavior of those nations which are plugged into the system." One only hopes that he is right. He knows that we shall still have wars. But if countries once thought twice before making war, now, Friedman writes, they will think three times; or so Friedman believes. But what about irrationality? And miscalculation? And accident? And path dependency? There are more ways to make war than to keep peace.

Not everyone likes globalization as defined by Friedman. Structural economic changes cost lots of people their jobs. Exporting industry to other countries usually entails trouble at home. A fast pace at a dull job must be some kind of hell. Friedman recognizes that there is plenty of opposition, in the private and public realms, and that this opposition is not without resources. But that does not discourage him, because he is convinced that globalization pays and that the laggards will soon be banging at the doors. And in this surge, he is happy to say, the United States is Number One. "We Americans," he writes, "are the apostles of the Fast World, the enemies of tradition, the prophets of the free market and the high priests of high-tech." He also cites a German foreign policy expert:

> The United States ... is definitely in a class of its own in the soft-power game. On that table, China, Russia and Japan, and even Western Europe, cannot hope to match the pile of chips the United States holds. People are risking death on the high seas to get into the United States, not China. There are not too many who want to go for an M.B.A. at Moscow University, or dress and dance like the Japanese. Sadly, fewer and fewer students want to learn French or German. English, the American-accented version, has become the world's language. This type of power—a culture that radiates outward and a market that draws inward—rests on pull not push; on acceptance not on conquest.... In this arena, all of them together—Europe, Japan, China, and Russia—cannot gang up on the United States as in an alliance of yesteryear. All their movie studios together could not break the hold of Hollywood. Nor could a consortium of their universities dethrone Harvard.

All true, and yet I am less optimistic and confident. A purely material account of economics is hardly the whole story. I see the French impose a quota on Hollywood offerings; their entertainment menu suffers, but the intellectuals couldn't care less. I see people all over the world harboring hostile feelings toward the United States, and I worry. I see governments, aggrieved in their sense of lost eminence and influence, taking every opportunity to put a spoke in our wheels. I do not like to see my country in this position. We can and must find sweeter, more winning ways. Will Friedman's song help? Will anything help? ■

A Formal Feeling

By ADAM KIRSCH

The Breakage by Glyn Maxwell

(Houghton Mifflin, 81 pp., $22)

MOST POETRY WRITTEN at any given time is bad, and all poetry written at any given time is new. Together, these facts can make it seem that poetry (in fact, any art) is always in decline, since in any reader's lifetime most of what he or she reads is inferior to what has been preserved from the past. So it is always risky to make judgments about "contemporary poetry," which may be proved wrong as the passage of time turns the experiments of the present into the patrimony of the future. In any case, posterity will cherish or ignore what we produce, it will use and misuse our efforts, as it sees fit.

Still, it is hard to avoid the judgment that almost all the poetry being written today, from the most celebrated to the most ordinary, fails to give us a particular pleasure that the poetry of the past can give: the pleasure of form, which for the last seven hundred years was the one essential requirement of poetry. In that time, English lyric poetry has been many things—an aristocratic entertainment, a means of instruction, an avenue to cosmic truth—but common to all of poetry's purposes was the use of meter and rhyme, structure for its own sake, as a form of abstract play. Today very few poets care about the formal elements of poetry, and those who do care are seldom adventurous with them. So drastic is the change that has taken place in this century that it often feels as though reading "contemporary poetry" is an activity of a different kind from reading "traditional poetry." Not just the form and the content, but the abilities required and the rewards offered, are intrinsically different.

The origins of this shift are no doubt social as well as literary; but one major source is the evolution, over the last two centuries, of the idea of the poet. Already in Shelley and Emerson, we find the idea that a poem is interesting because it is the work of a poet; that is, because it is the expression of an original mind. But when this idea is wedded to the democratic and psychological notion that everyone is inherently interesting, then poetry becomes merely an expression of self, always verging on narcissism: the record of a subjectivity, of what happened *to me*. And for this purpose, meter and rhyme are only obstacles, attempts to pave over the stream of consciousness.

This state of affairs prevails, I think, even in poets who are not stylistically plain or confessional in their subject matter. The best poets have higher concerns than reportage: certain epistemological,

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spiritual, and moral questions are very popular in contemporary poetry. But even here, the absence of form enforces a certain privacy and personality on the poet. To try to represent in poetry "how I think" or "how the world feels to me" is more challenging than to represent "what happened to me," but it is at bottom still an exercise in idiosyncrasy: it is an attempt at differentiating oneself, an imperative of sincerity.

OF COURSE, all poetry does in some way tell us a great deal about the poet's own sensibility and way of experiencing the world. The central difference with formal poetry is that, while the poet expresses himself, he does so always and only sideways, at an angle, because in writing formally he has implicitly agreed to turn his attention away from himself, toward a public realm. He has agreed to honor standards that originate outside himself. In this sense, the convention of form is an extension and heightening of the conventionality of language itself, which is prior to all its users and in some way resistant to their manipulation. Poetry calls attention to this aspect of language, which, though it is always present, is most often overlooked, especially in ordinary conversation and inartistic prose: that it is a medium, a self-subsisting thing, just as stone is the medium of sculpture and paint is the medium of painting. By writing formally, the poet both acknowledges the intractability of his medium and tames it: meter and rhyme deflect him from "what he means to say," but also allow him to impose his own will—his aesthetic will—on that medium.

When the poet writes formally, his attention is turned outward to language, and if he is personally revealed in language, it is more in the way a painter is revealed in his brushstrokes than in the way an analysand is revealed in reciting his dreams. When we read Milton, we come away understanding less about Milton than we do when we read most contemporary poets; we know less about his biography and about what he thinks he thinks. And yet he is at the same time immensely more present, as an artistic sensibility. Formal poetry enforces a different standard of interest than formless poetry, one that is simultaneously more and less egoistical: more, because the formal achievement is a deliberate and acknowledged imposition of the will on language, and less, because the poet does not care about making himself a unique personality.

This is an understanding of poetry that has largely gone missing in the last fifty years. Even in that period, however, there have been some poets who have understood poetry in this way; and it is significant that these are the best loved, most quoted, and most securely established poets of their time. Poets such as Auden, Lowell, and Larkin seem to be writing not modern poetry or contemporary poetry but poetry, while at the same time being naturally of their times. And this is heartening, for it suggests that the appetite for such poetry remains, even if it is seldom met. Even now, when a poet emerges who writes poetry as it was traditionally understood, he or she can expect a grateful and excited readership.

GLYN MAXWELL IS such a poet, and deserves such a readership. He is thirty-seven years old, an Englishman now living in America, and *The Breakage*, his fourth book, is his first to be published here. It shares with his earlier books a dexterity, a daring, and a wit that are very rare in poetry today; but it also goes beyond them toward a new tone, more somber and earnest. Auden is a recognizable presence in Maxwell's poetry—there is the same fondness for complicated stanzas, obscure narratives, Capitalized Abstract Nouns, camp exaggerations—but he is not merely a disciple. Maxwell writes original verse, and in reading him we get the sense of a distinct sensibility.

That unmistakable sensibility comes across so vividly, in keeping with the usual paradox of poetry, because Maxwell is so alert to the artificial and playful elements of poetry. The variety of his subjects is one sign of this talent: because, for him, writing is prior to writing about, he can make poems out of a hundred different things, from soccer matches to the Biblical Flood, from fleeting thoughts to long, complex stories. In "One and Another Go Home," from *Out of the Rain* (1992), we find a parable of revolution:

> The One flies back to his land and it
> dubs him King;
> the Other flies back to it too,
> and glimpsed in a thicket of glancing
> heavies is fair
> pummelled to yellow and blue and bloody
> good thing....
>
> while gnawing a bone the Other,
> remembered now,
>
> in all four corners of counties,
> on all fours,
> will wait his turn until
> enough are dismayed enough to muster
> and cry
> "Whose fault is it all?" at which he goes
> "not yours."

Here Maxwell seems to be updating the Auden of the Thirties for the post-Communist Nineties: there is the same ominous comedy, the same acuteness about mob psychology. In "Helene and Heloise," Maxwell writes about his two young cousins in leisurely, lovely stanzas:

> From in the palace of shades, inscrutable,
> cool,
> I watch exactly what I want to watch
> From by this swimming pool,
> Helene's shimmer and moss of a costume,
> each
> Soaking pony-tailing of the dark
> And light mane of the littler one
> as they walk...

In "Didymus the Seated," Maxwell, again Audenesque, writes in praise of doubt amid universal certainty:

> But in this blurting age,
> More to the taste of the open holes of the
> horde
> Is a boom, a spot, a cue, a one word
> roared,
> Repeated, roared, chanted, sung to
> a drum
> Or klaxoned over a sloping sea of foam
> Until it's all there is....
>
> In this mendacious season,
> Find the compelled attentive child
> who is staring
> Not at the idol but at the standing
> cheering.
> Do not disturb or remove him from
> his chair.
> Tiptoe in jeans up the aisle and say in
> his ear:
> There is a saint for doubt.

And there are many more excellent poems. "Nativity" is the rare Christian poem that is affecting even to a non-believer; "Video Tale of a Patriot" is a densely conceited portrait of a blustering, conservative Englishman; and from his previous book, *Tale of the Mayor's Son* (1990), there is "The Last Dessert," "Second Son in Exile," and "Tale of a Chocolate Egg," which is a pitch-perfect description of a bored young man's growing obsession with a new kind of candy. In this last poem, Maxwell manages to capture the way that our lust for new products is successfully ignited by the advertisements that we consciously despise, as in this passage, where the "bloke" is on his way to buy the new type of candy:

> "But is it hunger?" was a later thought,
> while walking by the finished
> marketplace,
>
> "or merely greed?" "It's greed," said
> half of him,

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the upper half; "It's hunger," went
the rest,
all accomplished liars there, but
charmers.

There was the advertisement,
the hoarding!
A great, swollen full-stop on his hopes
of backing out, and the silk
made it worse:

The bloke was going to eat the
chocolate egg!

The line "all accomplished liars there, but charmers" is a perfect example of Maxwell's fertility: in the middle of telling a story, he comes out with a little aphorism of wider application. This is the bubbling-over of ingenuity that can occur when the poet is not completely attentive to his subject—another advantage of formal writing.

The Breakage, as its title implies, turns to a new range of concerns. Much of Maxwell's older style remains, and we still find a good deal of comedy and high spirits; but the first third of the book is given over to the subject of World War I, which calls forth a more restrained, elegiac tone. Robert Frost and Edward Thomas, the subject of a series of poems here, add their influences to Auden's, and Maxwell's verse seems clarified. There are some difficulties with World War I as a subject, which I think at times impair the poetry; but overall *The Breakage* is a very successful book, and a worthy advance on Maxwell's earlier work.

Fine details can be found in just about every poem. Maxwell's greatest gift is to combine a quick and unexpected wit with a steadily beautiful lyricism, as in these stanzas from "Cap d'Ail":

Too woken up, too hot I came down here
to watch the sunlight widen to sunshine
and grow oppressive, like a fine idea
becomes unquestioned and begins
to burn,

and spread so fast and far it is the cause
of any act. It blazes like an *A*,
elates its fans and levers off the doors
of all the neutrals. Then it has its day.

Here the sun is simultaneously itself and an idée fixe of the kind that inspires political rallies or violent soccer fans. Sometimes the conceit itself predominates, as in "The Fire-Ants":

Fire-ants, they were, like scraps of earth,
Conferring as they dropped, reporting
Death
To the workers who not looking went
It's not
To which was added *If it is so what*
By the intelligentsia of the nest.
Their task it is to quibble and know best.

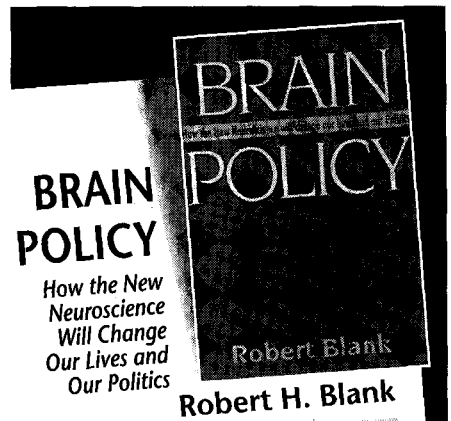
And at other moments the conceit broadens into metaphor, and the verse becomes purely lyrical, as in "Lullaby of the Thames," given here in full:

Now you are in my life, my insomniac,
I'll spare you some of this from the deep
gardens.
Yours, your sleep I'd make like how the
black
Unsmiling river turns and stretches,
widens
Or narrows, knowing nothing of its
names,
Or how it rose and why, or that all around
New days burst open, hurting. Like the
Thames
Your sleep I'd have long, easy, grey,
east-running,
With a light dirt of dream where it meets
ground.

But the poem that seems to reveal the most about Maxwell, his strengths and techniques, is the very lovely and mysterious "Hurry My Way." The poem starts out as an invitation to a friend or a lover to come visit the poet on a rainy day. But through each of the five stanzas the title phrase is repeated, so that it becomes less a simple request than a kind of cry or plea. Despite his plain diction, Maxwell is elliptical, so that the "plot" of each stanza remains elusive; but the power of the form is such that the poem gathers tremendous emotional force as it goes along. There is more melancholy in the halting, falling refrain "hurry my way" than a thousand free-verse lines could communicate:

For 30,000 noons is how it strings
Together, this, it's really what you're
roped to.
The rest is folding and unfolding things
You see, and free an arm to make a
note to
See more of, but it's you against the tide.
A
Wave is coming your way. Hurry my way.

And love was somewhere in the
subterfuge
That suits it, but it had to come and
get me.
The crowded room it glanced across
was huge
And snow was falling by the time it
met me.
It must have travelled each and every
byway,
And that's why it calls hurry. Hurry
my way.



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This strikes me as genuine poetry of a kind that very few living poets can write. And most of the poems in *The Breakage* sustain this level, or come close to it.

THE WORLD WAR I poems that begin the book present a different range of problems. One of those problems is national: that war is not the "breakage" in American history that it is in English history. Maxwell can write about the war through photographs and anecdotes of his grandfather, or through a "war poet" such as Edward Thomas, turning history into something more like memory; here, World War II or even the Civil War would be more likely to arouse the same emotions. Ironically, this makes Maxwell's first American book more English than his earlier ones, where the trappings of England in the 1990s were more easily translated into an American context.

More troubling, I think, is the danger of using large historical events as a way of enforcing solemnity. "An August Monday," a child's narrative that eventually reveals itself as spoken on the first day of the war, is very well done: the child's naïve egotism, which sees the first day of mobilization as merely a personal inconvenience, is cleverly rendered, while making us ever more conscious of the tragedy waiting in the wings. "My Grandfather at the Pool," which describes a snapshot of the poet's grandfather with his fellow soldiers, is flatter, the contrast between the cavorting men "about to dive" and their impending doom too predictable. But both these poems seem a kind of ventriloquism, an attempt to borrow the war's moral and emotional weight.

The longest poem in Maxwell's volume is the sequence "Letters to Edward Thomas"—there are fourteen of them, all but the last written in the voice of a friend of the poet's while he is off in the trenches. The last letter is in Maxwell's own voice:

> I teach you to my students, and aloud
> I wonder what you would have come to.
> While
> I wonder they look out at a white cloud
> And so we pass the time. Perhaps I'll
> guess
> Which one will ask me what they always
> ask:
> Whom do I write for? Anybody? Yes,
> You.

This last letter is the key to the sequence's strength and to its potential weakness. Maxwell has clearly made Thomas into a tutelary spirit, and the intensity of his feeling seeps into every poem: we feel that to him Thomas's early death is more than just a symbol of wasted promise, it is a personal loss akin to the death of a friend. And this feeling is most evident, and most accessible, in the last letter. Yet it is, at the same time, almost too much Maxwell's own feeling for the reader to enter into it fully. Everyone has private myths and presences who carry an immense charge; but the source of that charge is usually autobiographical, rooted in memories and associations that cannot always be communicated to others.

In this sequence, though it is always very dexterously and beautifully written, I sometimes feel that Maxwell is counting too much on the reader's sharing his affection for Thomas. That the sequence is annotated suggests that Maxwell wants to communicate extra-poetically the conditions that are necessary for enjoyment of the poem—to bring us into his private myth. If we cannot enter it, the sequence loses some of its force. Indeed, this may account for my difficulty with the World War I poems in general: I do not share Maxwell's associations with the war, either familial or imaginative, and so they move me less than the poems that emerge directly from his own life and thoughts, which are more universally accessible.

This reservation aside, *The Breakage* is a very exciting book. It is all the more exciting because Maxwell's particular talents—formal, comic, and lyrical—are perhaps the rarest in today's poetry, and so reading him seems to reestablish the link between "traditional" and "contemporary" poetry that too often seems severed. He proves what every good poet proves, that there is no historical time or social condition in which genuine poetry cannot be written; that in 1999 we are no more distant from the wellsprings of poetry than were poets in 1899, or in 1799. Beautiful and moving and authentic poetry can be written today; and we know this not least because Glyn Maxwell is writing it. ■

The Pearl Diver

By PETER BERKOWITZ

The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social by Hanna Fenichel Pitkin

(University of Chicago Press, 365 pp., $30)

I.

ACCORDING TO A common complaint, liberals are open-minded but shallow. The sophisticated version of this complaint adds that liberals are open-minded because they are shallow and shallow because they are open-minded. Being shallow, hard-pressed to understand the intricate play of passion and prejudice in human motivation, liberals flit from opinion to opinion, ingenuously embracing a variety of mutually contradictory and sometimes dangerous perspectives. Being open-minded, committed to giving equal consideration to all points of view, liberals glide quickly over the surface, neither lingering leisurely nor diving deeply into any particular viewpoint. Their open-mindedness forbids them from taking sides and making judgments.

Where the common complaint—and even more so the sophisticated diagnosis—goes astray is in its failure to distinguish between the decadence to which liberals are prone and liberalism at its most robust and principled. The blithe open-mindedness that blurs all distinctions is the poor cousin of the vigorous skepticism that draws fine-grained distinctions in order to take a reasoned and responsible stand. And the shallowness that, in flight from judgment, looks through or away from the intricate play of high and low passion in human conduct is the mangled and malnourished remnant of the generosity and the toleration that begin by taking each individual on his or her own terms in pursuit of judgments that are accurate and just.

And yet the pathologies of liberalism are real and recognizable and must be reckoned with. One way of reckoning with them that has been popular among

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professors is to search for alternatives to liberalism. This search is often fueled by the longing for a politics that restores the depth and the drama of which many intellectuals feel themselves to have been deprived by life under liberalism's dominion. For a considerable number of such professors of political theory and law, the most attractive alternative to liberalism in our day has been provided by the thinking of Hannah Arendt.

ARENDT'S CURRENT ASCENDANCY in academic circles may seem overdetermined. For those hungry for female heroes, Arendt stands out for her important books on a variety of subjects of lasting significance, including the rise of totalitarianism in the twentieth century, the decline of citizenship in the modern age, the lost revolutionary spirit of the American Founding, and Eichmann and the banality of evil. For an academic left that no longer draws moral inspiration or political guidance from the writings and legacy of Marx, Arendt provides a thrilling vision of an intensely participatory politics. And for the many intellectuals who, attracted by the postmodern dream of constant self-creation, have moved from impatience to disgust with the limits that liberal constitutionalism imposes on the pace and the content of change in democratic politics, Arendt enticingly puts resistance, revolution, and radical innovation—"the capacity of beginning something anew"—at the very center of citizenship.

Still, to reduce Arendt's ascendancy to the spirit of the times would do an injustice to her powerful, scintillating mind and to the sweep of her accomplishments. She is certainly among the most original and outstanding political theorists of the twentieth century. The impact of her writings is owed not least to the intrinsic interest of her bold and iconoclastic arguments, which present a flavorful mix of historical erudition, philosophical analysis, literary elegance, and moral and political criticism. In the nine books that she published in her lifetime, as well as in numerous articles, essays, and reviews, she pronounced her opinions about ideas and events in a tone of sovereign mastery, as if the accumulated wisdom of human learning were speaking through her; it is a tone that few can muster who did not receive their philosophical training in a German university before the war. Her command of historical fact, the coherence of her theoretical speculation, and the quality of her moral and political judgment were more than occasionally unreliable, but her thinking was always formidable.

II.

HANNAH ARENDT WAS born in 1906 in Königsberg, a Prussian port on the Baltic, into a well-to-do Jewish family. She was taught to be proud of being a Jew but was reared without religious observance or Jewish learning. When she was 18, she entered the University of Marburg to study theology. She was dazzled by her teacher Martin Heidegger, and he was dazzled by her. His legend was already growing, and his classes were attended by many destined to exercise a major influence on twentieth-century intellectual life (including Hans-Georg Gadamer, Hans Jonas, Karl Löwith, Herbert Marcuse, and Leo Strauss). The professor and the student soon began, and maintained for three years, what was to become the most discussed love affair in the history of modern philosophy.

Arendt left Marburg at the end of her first year and completed her formal studies in Heidelberg, under the direction of Heidegger's friend Karl Jaspers. With Jaspers, who became a trusted mentor and lifelong friend, she wrote a dissertation, *Saint Augustine's Conception of Love*, an ambitious and highly theoretical work that drew on the thought of both her teachers to clarify Augustine's understanding of the human condition.

In 1933, Arendt left Nazi Germany for Paris, where she worked as executive secretary of Youth Aliyah, helping young Jews make their way to Israel. Five years later she finished the final two chapters of *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman*, a biography that she had begun in Berlin in 1929. At the heart of the matter stood "the Jewish Question," which Arendt analyzed in strictly secular terms. The life of Varnhagen—a passionate, intelligent woman of the eighteenth century who was enticed by Enlightenment and bourgeois respectability but menaced by anti-Semitism—embodied the dilemma of the Jew in modern Europe, which was that of a pariah, or member of an outcast class, who seeks to gain admission to high or good society. If the pariah succeeds, she finds herself indelibly marked as a parvenu, seen by all, including herself, as one who has recently arrived and therefore does not truly belong.

In 1941, after the outbreak of war and a brief period of internment in France, Arendt and her husband Heinrich Blücher—in his youth a rogue and revolutionary socialist and in his maturity an irascible intellectual and, until his death in 1970, a devoted companion to Arendt—set out for the United States. In New York, she continued her political work for Zionist causes. She also became a regular columnist for the *Aufbau*, a weekly German-language newspaper, writing frequently on Jewish politics and Zionism; and she contributed articles on politics and ideas to *Commentary*, *The Nation*, *Partisan Review*, and the *Review of Politics*. In 1946, she was named a senior editor at Schocken Books, a post which not only allowed her to supervise the publication of important works by distinguished authors from abroad such as Kafka and Benjamin and Scholem, but also brought her into regular contact with leading literary figures in America.

It was with the publication of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in 1951 (the same year in which she became an American citizen) that Arendt secured her reputation as an intellectual force. In this dense, disorganized, bewilderingly complex, and undeniably brilliant study, Arendt drew on history, political thought, and philosophy to argue that Hitler's Nazism and Stalin's Communism, though mortal enemies opposing each other from opposite sides of the political spectrum, were alike in the most fundamental respect: both were embodiments of a radically new and terrifying form of government.

Totalitarianism, according to Arendt, was an innovation of the modern spirit. It arose, she argued, out of the paradoxical alliance of two dispositions: the Promethean ambition that seeks to bring all the

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world under human control, and the flight from responsibility that regards human affairs as if they were a function of large, impersonal, ineluctable forces over which men and women have no control. The coexistence of the ambition to control the world completely with the feeling of being at the mercy of uncontrollable forces gives rise, according to Arendt, to governance by terror, which is the essence of totalitarianism. The totalitarian ethos, in which the ruling terrorizers act like cruel, omnipotent gods and the terrorized subjects are reduced to powerless, subhuman victims, receives its purest expression in the creation of concentration camps, which "are the laboratories where changes in human nature are tested."

ARENDT'S ACCOUNT OF totalitarianism overlapped with themes in Heidegger's writings and ideas developed by Frankfurt School thinkers such as Adorno and Horkheimer. Yet Arendt could never have embraced Heidegger's bone-chilling pronouncement in 1935 that "from a metaphysical point of view, Russia and America are the same"; nor did she indulge the Frankfurt School's contempt for the achievements of constitutional democracy. Arendt knew that politics was indispensable, and she was keenly aware that the protection of individual rights was a precondition for justice. Yet she was also convinced that politics aimed at something grander than life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Her study of totalitarianism persuaded her that the understanding of what she came to refer to as our "lost treasure" required the rethinking of the very foundations of politics and human dignity.

Arendt eventually set forth the results of her rethinking in *The Human Condition* (1958). She agreed with Nietzsche that God was dead, that metaphysics and religious faith could not provide a foundation for human dignity, but she warned that this did not mean that the old contest between the contemplative life and the political life had been decided in favor of the latter. Disavowing any intention of simply reversing the traditional hierarchy by elevating politics above contemplation, she aimed instead to provide a fresh articulation of the internal structure of the *vita activa*, or the active life.

In the process, she does frequently appear to suggest—notwithstanding her jarring allusion at the beginning of the book to "the highest and perhaps purest activity of which men are capable, the activity of thinking," and again at the very end to "thinking" as an activity that "as such would surpass" all others—that the good life for a human being, the life in which the highest and the most human capacities are exercised, is the political life. Yet what Arendt has in mind is not politics as it has come to be understood and lived in the modern age. For the modern age has witnessed the "degradation of politics into a means for something else," be it the exercise of individual liberty, the pursuit of private interest, or the provision for each individual's liberty and private interest by means of laws regulating production and consumption and administering the redistribution of wealth.

FOR ARENDT, by contrast, politics rightly understood does not set the stage for the achievement of some other, nonpolitical good—physical pleasure, wealth, honor, or even contemplation—but rather is a genuine good, an end in itself. Modern ideas—that each individual is sovereign, that man is the master of nature, that (paradoxically) even when he exercises his sovereignty and displays his mastery over nature man remains in the grips of forces that determine his thoughts and deeds—conceal features of the human condition that give politics its true significance. And the ills of modern life—the focus on the satisfaction of material need, the quest for comfort, and the conformism and isolation bred by mass society—suppress the experiences that nourish the desire for a life in the public realm.

To break free from the "world alienation" which "has been the hallmark of the modern age," it is necessary to understand politics properly, and for that one must study the ancients, especially the ancient Greek *polis* and those artists and thinkers who experienced politics in its original and authentic form, recorded its glories, and set down its principles. The Greeks knew what we have forgotten. They knew that politics consists in collective deliberation in the public realm, in the giving of speeches in the presence of one's fellow citizens, in persuading and being persuaded in turn.

To understand politics in its purity, it is necessary to begin from the fact—which Arendt claims that philosophers since Plato have failed to appreciate—that "men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world." This constitutive feature of the human condition, called by Arendt "plurality," means that human beings are alike in that each is unique and irreducible. This shared uniqueness and irreducibility—otherwise known as individuality—is connected to another feature of the human condition, which Arendt calls "natality." Natality, "the new beginning inherent in birth," is, Arendt holds, the ground of the distinctively human capacity, "the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting."

But one cannot begin something new alone, and one cannot engage in action by oneself. To act means to act with other human beings, to see and to be seen, to speak and to listen, to disclose one's self and to witness the self-disclosure of others. Still, not every cooperative or collaborative deed counts as "action" in Arendt's construction of the term. In particular, action in the precise sense must not be confused with the two other broad and basic categories that constitute the active life. The first is "labor," which produces the material goods necessary for the maintenance of life. The second is "work," which creates or fabricates the distinctively human world of artifacts and ideas and "bestows a measure of permanence and durability upon the futility of mortal life and the fleeting character of human time." Action, by contrast, which is inseparable from speech, association, and the founding and preserving of political orders, is essentially revelatory: "In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world."

ALWAYS A PRECARIOUS achievement, action "needs for its full appearance the shining brightness we once called glory, and which is possible only in the public realm." The public realm provides the place where human beings can not merely rise above the drudgery of everyday life, the concern with production and reproduction, with labor and family, but also burst the chains of necessity: "action can be judged only by the criterion of greatness because it is in its nature to break through the commonly accepted and reach into the extraordinary, where whatever is true in common and everyday life no longer applies because everything that exists is unique and *sui generis*."

Action is not some sort of individual right that government is obliged to protect, and it is not a good that can be promised equally to all. Action is an accomplishment, and a grand one. The ancient Greek *polis*, which for Arendt furnishes the paradigm of the public realm, "was permeated by a fiercely agonal spirit, where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievements that he was the best of all." Arendt was perfectly aware that everybody cannot be the best. One wishes that she had explored more fully the practical significance of an obvious implication: many people will not be attracted to or improved in, and some will be humiliated and crushed by, the fierce contest for distinction that constitutes the public realm.

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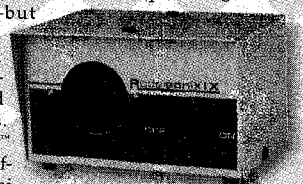

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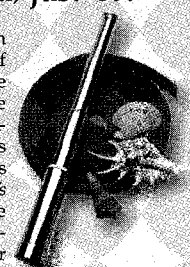

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But the strong and the gifted are truly enviable. By acting in concert, by cooperating in the construction of the principles, laws, and institutions that will govern their lives, by publicly telling the story of their deeds and listening to the stories that others tell, citizens—or the articulate and ardent among them—can achieve what may be the fullest and finest freedom of which human beings are capable. Arendt's politics even seems to provide the special satisfaction that had been thought to be the peculiar prerogative of philosophy and religion, since the common space that citizens jointly create and maintain somehow permits the disclosure of nothing less than the fundamental character of the world and the essence of the human condition.

It is reasonable to wonder whether politics, as Arendt grandiosely reconstructs it, was ever achieved in the ancient world. One could wonder with greater reason to what extent "Greek thought" and "the Greek world"—Arendt's euphemisms for her idealizing and idiosyncratic amalgam of Homer, Thucydides, Sophocles, Plato, and Aristotle—are poetic evocations, or even fabrications. Yet even if this vision of politics as self-realization and self-actualization had never been achieved, or even considered, in the ancient world, one could still ask whether, in the modern age, politics as Arendt construes it is possible or desirable.

Arendt believed not only that politics in the ancient, exalted sense is in the modern age possible and desirable, but also that for a few brief, splendid moments it has been actual. Her argument in *On Revolution* (1963)—which has exercised a tremendous influence on leading law professors celebrating the power of the people, outside of formal procedure, to make constitutional law, and on prominent political theorists championing the communitarian critique of liberalism, and on myriad advocates of participatory democracy—was that, in the modern era, "public freedom" was attained most spectacularly in the revolution through which the United States of America was founded.

Contrary to what had been supposed by generations of scholars, it was not Lockean liberalism or economic self-interest that gave birth to America. The real parent was the republican political tradition, which taught that virtue consisted in selfless devotion to the common good, that freedom and happiness were inseparable, and that all three were achieved by citizens who participated vigorously in public life.

Arendt found such republicanism in Revolution-era America, where people showed their devotion to the common good, she argued, not in their willingness to give their lives on the battlefield, but in their dedication to the idea of continuous public deliberation about the principles of self-government.

The public deliberation that brings into existence a new order is both revolutionary and the quintessential political act; it constitutes that "new beginning," the essence of action, in which individuals cooperate to create a common world. In contrast to the ordinary understanding, which associated revolution with violence, lawlessness, and war, Arendt sought to show that revolution correctly understood is really the paradigmatic expression of the political good. Indeed, for Arendt, revolution has a fixed purpose: "the foundation of freedom, that is, the foundation of a body politic which guarantees the space where freedom can appear."

Arendt appreciated "the blessings of 'limited government,'" but her thirst for the spirit of revolution left her far from satisfied with them. While the rights or negative liberties that liberalism protects are preconditions for true or public freedom, they must not be taken for the real thing: "the distance between tyranny and constitutional, limited government is as great as, perhaps greater than, the distance between limited government and freedom." Not only does she firmly oppose the limitation of politics to the protection of rights, but such limitation, Arendt vigorously contends, runs contrary to the spirit of "absolute novelty" or radical innovation out of which the United States arose. It is doubtful, however, whether the Founders saw themselves in this way. For while they did indeed understand themselves to be innovators, their innovation, as they understood it, was to form a government based on reflection and reason, and grounded in natural freedom and equality. In the process they also understood themselves to have incurred a debt to traditional ideas and institutions (such as the common law, ancient republican theory, modern natural rights doctrine, and Christianity).

Still, Arendt insists on seeing the Founders' "revolutionary spirit" as the essence of the American Revolution, and she deplores their failure to embody it in "lasting institutions." Of course, as *The Federalist* makes clear, they had their reasons. They did not reject the need for innovation, but they sought to reconcile it

Kangaroo

to Paul Kane

Like flustered actors
who don't know what to do
with their hands, they're hanging
around in awkward clusters,
paws dangling, ears pricked for a cue.

And then look properly
stunned when our typecast
tour bus, bumptious as a cousin
none of them invited, raises
a ruckus of flung stones and dust

and slows to a halt
before them, face to face.
If it isn't clear what a tour bus is,
they've seen its like before;
their startle softens to a stare

of seeming acceptance,
as if next time they'd sniff
our coming in advance. A twitch
from one, and all's a blank:
in unison they begin to bounce

across the empty
apron of the plain (where
every line has been forgotten
or not even thought of once
for millions of years), an unlikely

hop not happy-
go-lucky but utterly
matter-of-fact; then they stop up-
stage, for reasons none of us,
on the edge of our seats, can guess.

Yet it seems so human
when we happen upon (what
joy, it's blue) a kangaroo
standing back from the crowd:
her joey's tall enough to nurse

on its feet, while its head
and forearms are buried deep
in the pouch, like a woman
rummaging in her purse for something
nobody else can touch.

Mary Jo Salter

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with the need for stability. In the amendment procedures given in Article V, for example, the Constitution provides mechanisms for basic change, but the framers designed them to make fundamental innovation a difficult and drawn-out process, neither lightly entered into nor carried through to completion without careful deliberation and the consent of supermajorities. For Arendt, by contrast, a truly well-constructed regime would seek to make fundamental innovation a routine event, institutionalizing, as it were, permanent revolution.

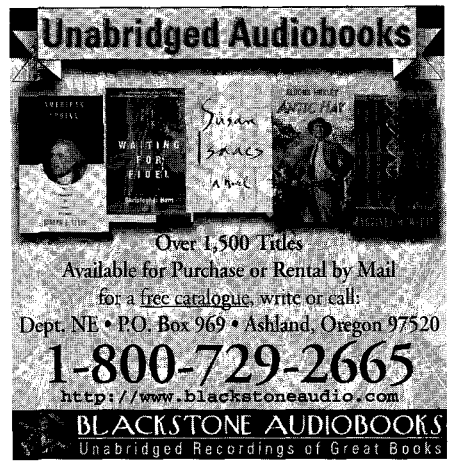
Arendt's interpretation of America accomplished an amazing reversal. Where left-leaning intellectuals had been eager to see the ideals for which the Revolution was fought and the Constitution was created as a major source of the ills that afflict contemporary American democracy, Arendt's republican reconstruction gave them a new opportunity to look back to the American past and see the Founding era as a height from which we have fallen, a standard for judging the contemporary morass, a goal for revivifying our public life. It was no longer necessary for critics on the left to condemn American popular culture, American material prosperity, and the American preoccupation with individual freedom by appeal to a disgraced Marxism, or to invoke the abstruse writings of philosophers such as Hegel and Heidegger. Suddenly, thanks to Arendt, constitutional law scholars and political theorists on the left, like their colleagues on the right, could show their patriotic colors by criticizing America in America's name. And this meant that professors on the left, like those on the right, exposed themselves to the charge of lapsing into nostalgia for a past that never existed, of fabricating myths, of abusing history.

In the same year in which *On Revolution* appeared, Arendt also published *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, her most controversial book. She had been sent to Israel by *The New Yorker* to cover the trial of the notorious organizer and administrator of the Final Solution, and she produced an account that seemed to stand truth obscenely on its head by denying Eichmann's responsibility and blaming the Jews for the catastrophe that befell them.

This understanding of Arendt's analysis was unfair. Although her argument diminished Eichmann's responsibility, it did not exculpate him of crimes against humanity. And although she deplored the judgment and the conduct of many Jewish leaders during the Holocaust, and lamented the failure of the Jews to offer greater resistance—she speaks matter-of-factly of "the submissive meekness with which the Jewish people went to their death"—she issued no indictment and places her own description of Jewish conduct in context by adding that "the sad truth of the matter is that ... no non-Jewish group or people had behaved differently." In the presentation of her lacerating judgments, however, Arendt took few precautions to avert predictable inferences or to soften the blow inflicted on many of her readers' understandably open wounds. Even her admiring biographer Elisabeth Young-Bruehl found her tone "imperious," her choice of words "ill-considered" and "intemperate," and expressed regret that Arendt had "obscured" important moral issues with "needless irony and misquotation."

In a postscript to the revised and enlarged edition of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt rejected any suggestion that her book was biased or anything other than a "trial report" based on the court proceedings and the historical record. Then, in 1965, Jacob Robinson, a consultant to the prosecution in Jerusalem, published *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight*, a massively documented and unrelenting book that reads like a 300-page legal brief. In paragraph after excruciatingly detailed paragraph, Robinson raised grave doubts about Arendt's factual accuracy, her use of key documents, and her understanding of international law. At a minimum, Robinson's criticisms remind us that one of the very features that makes Arendt's political theory distinctive and attractive, the manner in which she wins speculative conclusions from original historical reconstruction, also leaves her work vulnerable, particularly to the charge that she molds or invents history in order to advance moral and political judgments.

What all the doubts raised by Robinson's criticisms cannot erase are the soul-wrenching questions that Arendt compels her reader (even her angry reader) to confront: how modern political life has forged instruments and institutions that provide for the bureaucratization of mass murder, and how individuals in desperate situations can make sincere but wrong judgments about the right thing to do. Indeed, the question of judgment in politics increasingly came to occupy Arendt until her death in 1975. During the last decade of her life, she offered her own defiantly independent judgments on the political crises of the day, producing widely discussed essays on civil rights and civil disobedience, power and violence, truth and politics. She publicly opposed the war in Vietnam, but she insisted, in the face of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campus radicalism and the politicization of academic life, that the first responsibility of the university was to maintain intellectual standards.

Her last work, *The Life of the Mind*, was left unfinished, lacking the concluding third part, "Judging," which was to have followed Part One, "Thinking," and Part Two, "Willing," and was to have brought to a culmination a lifetime of reflection on freedom. Fortunately, remarks scattered throughout "Thinking" and "Willing," as well as ideas developed in her posthumously published lectures on Kant's political philosophy, suggest the likely shape of her argument. It appears that Arendt came to understand judgment as a faculty by which we retrospectively grasp particular deeds and events and, through the stories we construct and the evaluations we render, redeem or immortalize them. Thus Arendt held firmly to the view, which she expounded in *The Human Condition*, that human beings are essentially storytelling animals who achieve freedom in the act of storytelling by which they make things immortal.

What is left to explain is how a thinker who did more than any other to establish the primacy of public freedom, the separation of politics from morality and philosophy, and "the joys of appearing in word and deed without equivocation and without self-reflection that are inherent in action," inclined at the end toward the view that action must be redeemed or immortalized by fabrication and reflection, and hence that freedom is inseparable from, indeed tantamount to, the life of the mind.

III.

MANY WOULD AGREE with the judgment of Hanna Fenichel Pitkin that Arendt's "primary contribution surely centered on the constellation of three interrelated concepts that she treated as almost synonymous: 'action,' 'politics,' and 'freedom.'" In her eccentrically titled but thoughtfully argued book, Pitkin sets out to defend and to extend Arendt's contribution by disentangling it from what she regards as Arendt's confused use of the concept of "the social," or the attacking blob to which Pitkin's title refers.

Arendt uses "the social" as a term of art. It denotes the forces in the modern age that unleash into the political world activities related to care for the family and the provision of the material necessities of life. These activities, Arendt holds, were originally and rightly restricted by the ancient world to the private realm, but in the modern age they increasingly become a task for public management. In the modern state, government is transformed into "a gigantic, nation-wide administration of housekeeping," simultaneously corrupting the integrity of private and public life.

Like the mysterious blob from outer space featured in any of a number of kitschy science-fiction films of the 1950s, the social as depicted by Arendt silently and implacably grows and spreads and dehumanizes all whom it touches. That is Pitkin's thesis. And the blob, I mean "the social," includes socialism as well as capitalism, mass society, public opinion, the bureaucratic state, and technology. It robs individuals of their humanity, transforming them into materialistic, philistine, conformist automatons. The social figures most prominently in the argument of *The Human Condition*, where it functions as an antithesis to politics; but something like it is already evident in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, depriving individuals of agency. And it can be seen in the argument in *On Revolution* that concern for "the social question"—the attention, motivated by pity, to the plight of the poor—derails the revolutionary spirit by introducing nonpolitical considerations into the quintessentially political action.

IT IS DIFFICULT to imagine a hostile critic examining more effectively than Pitkin the flaws in Arendt's concept of the social, for hostility would inhibit the acquisition of the mastery of Arendt's texts that Pitkin displays at every turn. The most damaging difficulty, from Pitkin's point of view, is that in appealing to a mysterious, invisible force that tyrannizes human conduct, Arendt contradicts her central idea that human beings, endowed with the capacity to start afresh, to undertake the unexpected and to perform the unprecedented, can always defy the ideas and institutions that prescribe their conduct and resist the routines that tell them how to behave.

But is this a difficulty in Arendt's thought or in the world? For what is made by man—deliberately or inadvertently, in short order or stretching across millennia—is not, for that reason, under human control. Some things are easier made than unmade. Many speeches are simply uttered but hard to retract. Countless deeds are readily done and then must be endured because they cannot be revoked.

In her final chapter, Pitkin reasonably recommends an "unmythologized" understanding of the social, according to which it denotes the "absence of politics where politics belongs, a condition in which a collectivity of people—for whatever reason—cannot (or at any rate do not) effectively take charge of the overall resultants of what they are severally doing." Also reasonable, if anticlimactically conventional, is Pitkin's ending admonition to overcome the social by rousing ourselves to engage in the reform of institutions, the cultivation of character, and the clarification of the ideas that define and deform the age.

IN ATTEMPTING TO account for the role that the social blob plays in Arendt's political theory, Pitkin suggestively explores a considerable variety of factors, but she leaves unexamined a simple hypothesis whose explanatory power surpasses that of those she considers at length. It is that Arendt's account of the social, or the ills of modernity, is shaped by her view of politics, freedom, and action, or what she takes to be the best in the human condition. It is certainly understandable in a book that sets out to save Arendt's "lost treasure" that Pitkin should keep her distance from the hypothesis that the features that she finds most worthy in Arendt's political theory produce and nurture what she finds least worthy. But it is not acceptable, for it is always possible and really quite common for a theory, like the man who is his own worst enemy, to need saving from itself. Indeed, Arendt's understanding of politics suffers from a monism that suppresses the variety of ways of being human, and an idealism that denigrates the dignity of everyday life, and a sensationalism that obscures the very historical experiences and seminal books whose lost treasure Arendt seeks to recover.

Notwithstanding her celebration of "plurality," or the fact that we always live among others who like us are irreducibly unique individuals, and notwithstanding the importance that she attaches to "natality," the human capacity for spontaneity and innovation, Arendt's account of action tends toward a monism which holds that politics alone expresses individuality and brings freedom (except in *The Life of the Mind*, where the monistic tendency moves in the opposite direction). The trouble is not so much with the ideas of plurality and natality but with the obvious fact that neither really has anything to do with Arendt's claims that the good life is the political life and the political life consists in public deliberation. In fact, the premise of plurality is more compatible with the view, typical of liberal modernity, that there are many goods and many good ways of life, and certainly too many worthwhile and admirable human endeavors to permit an ordering that enshrines at the top of a hierarchy a single conception of human happiness or excellence.

As for natality, it proves nothing about our capacity for those "new beginnings"

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that Arendt believes to be constitutive of human beings and of politics: ants and aardvarks also "appear in the world by virtue of birth." More importantly, the capacity for beginning something altogether new is not rooted in birth or in mortality. It is rooted in reason, as Nietzsche explains in *The Gay Science* in a magnificent (and sadly neglected) aphorism that he entitles "*Long Live Physics!*" To truly make new beginnings, and to make of ourselves new beginnings, it would first be necessary to "become the best learners and discoverers of everything that is lawful and necessary in the world." Having sized up the world as it really is, and having understood the power of necessity and the laws that it prescribes, we could then determine what is in our power, what laws it is open to us to give to ourselves.

AT THE SAME TIME, despite her criticism of Platonic idealism, in particular the tendency in Plato's philosophy to deprecate political life in favor of the life devoted to knowing the eternal and unchanging ideas, she idealizes politics in such a way as to degrade not only ordinary life but also politics as it is experienced by most citizens, officeholders, and statesmen. It is not just that, in her view, politics is a rare achievement. She goes further, and argues as if the term should be reserved for the ideal, which she treats as essentially eternal and unchanging. In this, Arendt's idealism inflicts a harsher condemnation than Plato's philosophy on the world of change and appearance. Plato, while searching for justice in its perfect form, still recognized justice in its imperfect, empirical instantiations and in the various one-sided opinions about it that men held. But Arendt prefers not to soil the good name of politics by lending it to those shadows and simulacra—wheeling and dealing, negotiating and compromising, managing and administering—that divert the practitioners of governance in contemporary liberal democracy.

And while she undertook an extended search for the grounds for judgment in the public realm, Arendt exacerbates the problem of distinguishing right from wrong by sensationalizing the meaning of politics. One way she sensationalized it was by allowing into the meaning of politics only that which is sensational. Politics is the realm in which each citizen, like Homer's Achilles, strives to be "the doer of great deeds and the speaker of great words." Another is by forcing the texts and historical episodes that she adduces on behalf of her understanding of politics to proclaim the sensational meaning that belongs to its essence.

Consider a particularly egregious example of Arendt's sensationalizing distortion. In *The Human Condition*, she quotes a fragment from Aristotle's *Ethics* to illustrate the Greek belief in the primacy of politics and the indispensable role of public life in allowing individuals to approach immortality. In this passage, however, Aristotle proclaims precisely the opposite:

> ... we should try to become immortal as far as that is possible and do our utmost to live in accordance with what is highest in us. For though this is a small portion [of our nature], it far surpasses everything else in power and value.... A life guided by intelligence is the best and most pleasant for man, inasmuch as intelligence, above all else, is man. Consequently, this kind of life is the happiest.

Contrary to what Arendt suggests in *The Human Condition* (though consistent with what she came to argue almost two decades later in *The Life of the Mind*), what Aristotle actually says in the *Ethics* is that politics, though serious and honorable, is toilsome and decidedly inferior in seriousness and freedom to thought, and therefore we should, as much as it lies in us, strive to live a contemplative life. So far did Arendt take her sensationalizing that Adolf Eichmann, who proclaimed that he would go to his grave laughing for having killed six million Jews, becomes in her analysis sensationally ordinary.

TOGETHER, THE MONISM, the idealism, and the sensationalism that inhere in Arendt's concept of politics encourage the construction of the social as a kind of catch-all category into which to dump the mélange of responsibilities which government has assumed in the modern world but which, according to Arendt, do not belong to the essence of politics. So what accounts for the exaggerations and the mythologization that deform Arendt's concept of politics?

A part of the explanation is the characteristic vices that many European émigré intellectuals of Arendt's generation brought to the effort to understand the United States: an intolerance for the imperfections of democratic politics and a reflexive contempt for bourgeois or popular culture. A less remarked upon but also significant part of the explanation, however, lies in Arendt's peculiar understanding of the thinker's vocation.

In her essay on her friend Walter Benjamin, Arendt described a type of thinking that many scholars have persuasively and approvingly identified as capturing Arendt's own approach to the study of intellectual and political history:

> Like a pearl diver who descends to the bottom of the sea, not to excavate the bottom and bring it to light but to pry loose the rich and the strange, the pearls and the coral in the depths and to carry them to the surface, this thinking delves into the depths of the past—but not in order to resuscitate it the way it was and to contribute to the renewal of extinct ages. What guides this thinking is the conviction that although the living is subject to the ruin of time, the process of decay is at the same time a process of crystallization, that in the depth of the sea, into which sinks and is dissolved what once was alive, some things "suffer a sea-change" and survive in new crystallized forms and shapes that remain immune to the elements, as though they waited only for the pearl diver who one day will come down to them and bring them up into the world of the living—as "thought fragments," as something "rich and strange," and perhaps even as everlasting *Urphänomene*.

This is a masterful evocation of an indispensable intellectual type. As an ideal for thinking about the past, however, it is a calamity. In practice, pearl diving, or what Nietzsche called monumental history, provides (as he warned in *Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*) a license to make the past say what you please, and it will serve scholars—especially scholars with "inartistic natures"—as an excuse to prefer whatever pretty, glittering objects first meet the eye and happen to lie within easy reach.

HOW CAN WE know, in advance of investigation, that the shiny pearls and the colorful coral created by the action of the sea and time on the lost original objects are more precious and beautiful than the objects in their original condition, before they suffered exposure to the elements? What of the pearl diver's indifference to those objects which, owing to chance or to their shape and weight, get buried on the sea bottom and can only be recovered through tedious, time-consuming excavation? And what finally of those treasures of the past that, in sinking to the depths, break apart and require for proper appreciation not only recovery but patient reconstruction?

The pearl diver is an indispensable intellectual type because the past is indeed rich in objects that, having suffered a "sea-change," have become beautiful and valuable. But the pearl diver, as Arendt depicts him, is also a dangerous intellec-

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tual type, because he stands for the view that pearls are the only riches that the past has to offer. The pearl diver keeps buried treasures buried.

The stories that Arendt constructs about nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe, the ancient Greeks, and the founders of the United States may indeed be "rich and strange." But are they true and just? Without the work of time-consuming excavation and patient reconstruction, Arendt—to say nothing of the acolytes who tarnish her legacy both by treating her thought-experiments as if they were authoritative findings, and by imitating her practice but without her learning or her virtuosity—may on occasion pass off as "everlasting *Urphänomene*" what are, in comparison to the splendor of the overlooked originals, little better than cheap costume jewelry.

IV.

HANNAH ARENDT'S potent ideas were often divided against themselves. Both her political theory and her reputation are rife with paradox. She was a devoted student of the history of thought and of politics who played fast and loose with philosophical texts and the historical record. Her admirers celebrate her originality and fierce intellectual independence, which they see demonstrated in her comprehensive indictment of the philosophical tradition from Plato to Nietzsche for its rigid, blinkered, politically pernicious quest for absolute truth; but in reality Arendt recycles Nietzsche's and Heidegger's charges against the philosophical tradition and leaves those charges as unsubstantiated, as poorly grounded in her work as they were in the work of her often unacknowledged authorities. She prized independence of mind and stressed the need for openness to the unexpected, but somehow she knew for a certainty that God is dead and that the cosmos is unintelligible, bereft of an objective and universal moral law. She was an irrepressible political moralist who, in her major contribution to political theory, taught that greatness and not goodness was a standard for action in politics. For all her tenacious efforts to retrieve an appreciation of the internal articulations of the practical life, she indulged a romantic fascination with the spontaneous and the new that never allowed her to make peace with the mundane. And she was a thinker of rare gifts whose most influential theoretical writings sought to restore the forgotten dignity and grandeur of politics, but in the process she elaborated so exalted an ideal of citizenship that it made political life as we know it in liberal democracy look feeble and squalid.

Arendt's writings have enriched political theory and, more generally, intellectual life in America. She brought to her inquiries a knowledge of the history of European ideas and politics of which most professors trained in America could only dream. She offered a comprehensive account of the scourges to humanity that took shape in Europe in the nineteenth century and convulsed the world in the twentieth century. Facing a liberal imagination that had grown smug and sluggish, she provided critics with an enticing vision of a pure and exhilarating politics, a vision of the peaks and the valleys of human life that the liberal tradition had fallen into the habit of obscuring, disparaging, or falsifying. And yet Arendt's own theorizing obscured, disparaged, and falsified elements of political life and the human condition, particularly those elements in which the liberal tradition had acquired a special competence.

Arendt failed to show how her wisdom might be used wisely. For she tended to think in terms of stark alternatives, and she constantly invited her readers to take sides and to choose one way or the other: politics or the social; republicanism or liberalism; action or thinking. To be sure, she occasionally qualified the antitheses, but not consistently or convincingly enough to demonstrate how her oppositions could be woven into a more comprehensive whole, and to explain why such weaving would be worth the effort.

Our political life as well as our political theory stand to benefit from a few lessons in the ancient art of weaving. This is not to say that one must go to school with Plato, for whom weaving is a frequent metaphor for the art of politics. What is important is to cultivate a certain spirit. The spirit I have in mind is nothing very fancy, but it does make demands. It is a spirit that is skeptical, generous, and tolerant. It is open to the variety of ways of being human without closing its eyes to the powerful human propensity to inhumanity. It learns to live with many opinions and practices of which it cannot wholly approve, both out of respect for human diversity and appreciation of human frailty, which together make it reluctant to entrust the individuals who administer the state with the power to enforce morals. It takes truth wherever it finds it and expects to find some part of the truth just about everywhere. By rights, such a spirit deserves to be called liberal. One could find much in it that deserves to be called Socratic. The main thing is to appreciate that such a spirit is a ground of our freedom, a compass for navigating the always treacherous and occasionally majestic waters of politics, and a vital support of our dignity as human beings. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 5

One of Batakovic's quarrels is with Noel Malcolm's conclusion that the Axis powers never resettled tens of thousands of Albanians in Kosovo during World War II. Malcolm's research of the occupying countries' documents shows that there was never such a plan. Nationalists have used this imaginary scheme to prove that Albanians were living in Kosovo "illegally"—a status that would conveniently justify their expulsion.

As for Alex Dragnich, he compares Cubrilovic's relevance in Serbia to that of the KKK in America. Cubrilovic was a Serbian hero and one of the most important Serbian intellectuals of the century. He became a government minister just after writing his 1944 plan for Albanian genocide. When he died in 1990, he was given a state funeral and was praised by governmental, academic, and media elites. His plans for the expulsion of the Albanians was not a fringe idea then or now. Serious discussions to deport massive numbers of Albanians started in 1933. Just a year after Cubrilovic submitted his 1937 memo to the government, Yugoslavia signed a treaty with Turkey calling for the deportation of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians. World War II temporarily interrupted this plan.

Dragnich is wrong when he says that "Tito certainly rejected [Cubrilovic's] advice." After the war, Cubrilovic again encouraged Yugoslavia to "ethnically conquer" Kosovo. In the next decade, Tito oversaw the expulsion and/or execution of tens—and more likely hundreds—of thousands of Kosovar Albanians. Perhaps none of this would matter much to us today if Cubrilovic's genocidal plan for Kosovo had not been resurrected by Slobodan Milosevic. But Serb intellectuals, rather than denying the history of anti-Albanianism, may want to ask themselves why such ideas have survived.

Holier than thou

TO THE EDITORS:

Ethnic and religious intolerance, hatred, and bigotry are evil. They are evil when practiced by the Serbs in Kosovo. They are also evil when practiced by Editor-in-

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Chief Martin Peretz in TNR ("Holy Wars," May 10). I am a child day care provider who has loved children of varied races, creeds, colors, ethnicities, socioeconomic classes, and abilities. Although I am an Eastern Orthodox Christian, I am not a merciless, bloodthirsty bigot or a "partner in the near-genocide in Kosovo." As a member of the Orthodox Church in America, I know that every parish in the country has added special prayers to the services asking for peace in Kosovo, for God's help for those who have lost their homes, and for all those who are suffering; every parish has also been asked to take up special collections for the refugees. I also know that Alexy II, the patriarch of Moscow and titular head of the largest national Eastern Orthodox Church, has condemned Milosevic, ethnic hatred, and violence, and has prayed for the Kosovar Albanians. It is true that I and most other Orthodox Christians are against the NATO bombings. And I will pray for peace and an end to the NATO bombings until someone can prove that even one person has actually been helped by them.

BONNIE PRESCOP
Los Altos, California

God and monster

TO THE EDITORS:
Michelle Cottle deserves kudos for lifting the rock on D. James Kennedy, probably the most heartless professor of Christianity this side of the Balkans ("Of God and Gays," May 10). But she should have been more specific in pinpointing his brand of Presbyterianism. When one reads that a preacher is a "Presbyterian," most readers not well-versed in the different persuasions of Presbyterianism would assume that Kennedy adheres to "straight" (the term is theological and has no reference to sexual preference) Presbyterianism. But Kennedy belongs to the Presbyterian Church in America, a splinter group. As a "straight" Presbyterian myself, I don't want anyone thinking that my church would harbor such a fossil as D. James Kennedy.

Also, I am distressed that Cottle, like so many others today, confuses "flaunt" for "flout" when paraphrasing Kennedy: "And a nation that flaunts God's moral dictates cannot survive. . . ." Merciful heavens, isn't that Kennedy's most fervent desire?

JOHN H. WILDE
Greenwood, South Carolina

TO THE EDITORS:
We applaud TNR for publishing Michelle Cottle's informative article about the Reverend D. James Kennedy and the threat he poses to the freedom and liberty of all Americans. Kennedy's theocratic leanings and ties to Reconstructionism—which is a movement to replace the Constitution with the Old Testament—clearly betray the mainstream image he has worked so hard to cultivate.

Last summer, Kennedy and his minions helped launch the ostensibly innocuous, anti-gay "Truth In Love" newspaper ad campaign. Now, he has launched a multi-million-dollar anti-gay television ad campaign with the tagline: "It's not about hate. It's about hope." We are pleased that Cottle's article uncovered that the man offering such love and hope is currently promoting a book written by George Grant, a militant Reconstructionist who is fond of pointing to the Bible's call for the death penalty for gays and lesbians. Despite his contortions to portray himself as someone who loves gay people, this article revealed Kennedy's true intentions and helped expose his ads as the poison apples that they really are.

WAYNE BESEN
Associate Director of Communications
Human Rights Campaign
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS:
It does not appear as if "Dr. Kennedy—as he prefers to be called" gives any indication of having heard of the law of unintended consequences. I may not fear Kennedy and his desexualizing program, but I fear the consequences of his TV ads, as Kennedy's willing executioners shall surely take up his call in the name of Christianity.

JOHN VOORHEES
San Diego, California

Truth in labeling

TO THE EDITORS:
Jeremy McCarter's proposal that books "should be clearly labeled for what they are" in bookstores is a noble idea ("Denial.com," May 10). But imagine if other groups were allowed to influence how stores presented books by those they believe to be totally wrong: Marxists would press to get *The Federalist Papers* listed under "Bourgeois Democracy." Atheists would have the Bible labeled "Superstitious Propaganda." Christian groups would have atheist works labeled "God Denial" and Jewish theology texts "Messiah Denial." Competing financial advisers might lobby to have one another's books dumped into the astrology section.

No self-respecting bookseller would put up with any of this, and rightly so. Let the sellers provide neutral categories, as they do now, and let the reader decide for herself what is true and what is nonsense.

JORGE AMADOR
Forest Grove, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITORS:
One reason most librarians oppose the labeling of books, which Jeremy McCarter suggests that bookstores do, is that it implies that any book without a label is therefore accurate, good, safe, non-dangerous, etc. As anyone can see, this would be impossible to guarantee and is not the job of a library or bookseller.

Although the Library of Congress finally adopted the subject heading "Holocaust Denial Literature" in 1997, many older books were cataloged with different headings—hence Walter N. Sanning's book, *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, which seeks to prove that the Jews said to have died in the Holocaust were actually absorbed into Soviet territory, bears the seemingly inexplicable L.C. subject headings "Jews-Europe, Eastern-History" and "Europe, Eastern—Ethnic relations." It would appear that many of the online booksellers are using L.C. records.

JOHN A. DROBNICKI
Jamaica, New York

TO THE EDITORS:
For the record, the Holocaust denying "historian" Bradley Smith noted by Jeremy McCarter is not the same person as the excellent historian Bradley Smith, who has written extensively on World War II and other subjects during the past four decades or so. The former, whose middle initial is "R," has taken advantage of having an almost identical name with the latter (middle initial "F") to provide himself and other such "historians" a degree of credibility that is certainly undeserved.

STEVEN L. HELLERMAN
Claremont, California

TO THE EDITORS:
Jeremy McCarter criticizes independent booksellers who sell Holocaust denial books. He particularly dislikes being told that booksellers consider it their duty to sell the books their customers want, even when they voluntarily disagree with them. "[I]sn't it unseemly to make a virtue of what is at best a distasteful necessity?" he asks. While the booksellers would not disagree with him that their work has a moral dimension, they also believe they contribute to, and do not stifle, what Oliver Wendell Homes called the "free trade in ideas."

It is surprising that a magazine like THE NEW REPUBLIC, which cut its teeth opposing federal censorship during World War I and the denials of First Amendment rights during the Red Scare, should suggest otherwise.

CHRISTOPHER FINAN
President
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
New York, New York

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Juvenilia

EVERY SOCIAL CRISIS GENERATES its share of easy explanations, but adolescent crime wins the contest for pat answers. Not only is everyone an expert, but out-of-control children are often already the focus of uneasiness about social change, general anxiety, and just plain undisguised dislike. The tragic shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, have generated more than the usual number of theories. Few of these are original, and, in fact, many of them repeat a formula tried out almost 45 years ago, during the national panic over juvenile delinquency. True, the supposed cultural influences have changed, with blame pointed now at the dark lyrics of Marilyn Manson or virtual-reality, murder-and-mayhem computer games, but the ultimate message is pretty much the same: our children's behavior is out of control because our culture is out of control. The only solution is to find a form of censorship that can block adolescents' access to the violent images that impel them to behave violently.

ALSO LURKING BEHIND THIS MOST recent revival of cultural analysis is a tried-and-true explanation for almost everything that politicians and pundits dislike or don't understand these days: the 1960s. Perceived as a decade that generated a pernicious youth culture and permissive moral standards, that era still haunts us. And, even if many forms of social liberalism and moral relativism appeared long after 1969, well, they must have started in the '60s. This sort of moral/cultural explanation is no monopoly of the religious right or cultural conservatives. There are, for instance, plenty of liberals who want to extend a movie-rating-type system to the Internet.

ONE PROBLEM WITH THE CULTURAL EXplanation for teen violence is that, notwithstanding numerous scientific attempts to do so, it is impossible to prove—there are simply too many other possible causes to factor into the equation. Not that this should necessarily deter critics of our current teen culture. But it is one thing to regard what young people listen to, play, or consume as strange or vulgar or even mildly threatening, and another to argue that it incites specific behavior. Teenagers might be persuaded by advertising to buy a Big Mac or smoke a Camel, but that doesn't mean that song lyrics can make them commit mass murder.

ANOTHER PROBLEM WITH THE CULtural explanation is that we have been there before and ought to recognize from our experience some of the outcomes and implications of the argument. In the mid-'50s, especially between 1954 and 1956, Americans worried as deeply about juvenile delinquency as they did about the cold war, atomic annihilation, unemployment, and other social ills. The reason for this is not hard to figure out. Government commissions, the FBI (led by its indefatigable cultural warrior, J. Edgar Hoover), and a number of leading psychologists and social critics were all warning of a terrible scourge of juvenile crime. Cities and towns rushed to pass new ordinances, creating a whole category of "status crimes" that outlawed behavior by the age of the perpetrator. The favorites of these were local curfews, naming the hour when children under 18 had to be home. Quite naturally, this led to some increased incidence of lawbreaking by youths. But, overall, during the '50s juvenile crime was no higher than the decade that preceded it. Yet fears of juvenile delinquency continued to soar.

WHILE THERE WERE MANY EXPLAnations offered for delinquency, the one most printed in the pages of popular magazines and voiced during congressional hearings convened to examine the problem was the malevolent influence of crime and horror comic books. No one could accuse "Howdy Doody" or "I Love Lucy" of inciting teen violence, although there were cop-and-gangster TV shows and scores of films that might have been blamed. But television and films had codes of conduct and standards that kept them loosely in line (and, more important, in favor). Comic books, on the other hand, particularly violent and horror comics like those owned by William Gaines (publisher of *Tales From the Crypt*, for example), became the focus of a concerted effort to censor youth culture. The effort was led by liberal Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee and was founded on the psychological theories of Fredric Wertham, whose 1954 best-seller, *Seduction of the Innocent*, inspired a vast outcry against the comics. Wertham's theory was based on asking teenage criminals if they read comic books—not much different from the logic behind today's blaming of computer games or music. Kefauver and Wertham's movement ultimately persuaded the publishing industry to impose self-censorship. Juvenile crime didn't fall, but the comics changed; and some of the most violent ones disappeared altogether.

IF THE ANTI-COMIC-BOOK AGITATION did nothing much to end juvenile crime—if, ultimately, it wasn't really aimed at juvenile delinquency—what explains this panic? Clearly, something was happening in the '50s, just as it appears to be happening in our own time. The postwar era was a revolutionary time, the first generation in American history wherein children had substantial amounts of spending money. The result was the explosion of a youth culture designed to appeal specifically and exclusively to young people. The teenage market expanded rapidly, from clothing to automobiles to movies and fast food. Many adults looked on in horror or amusement as teenagers developed a special language, style, and set of ideas that challenged adult society. Children were growing up faster; they acted more like adults or at least demanded adult privileges. All of this looked immensely threatening to parents and parenting experts in the '50s. Parents and parenting experts in our age are also confronting a major new development. In this case, it's the advent of the Internet—which has exponentially increased the amount and scope of influences to which American kids are exposed.

SO WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE EXperience of the '50s in order to avoid recycling that decade's irrelevant response? First, we should be wary of the attempt to link behavior directly and precisely to culture. There is no clear evidence to support this, and, besides, we can probably never develop a form of acceptable censorship anyway. It is also important to separate things that we don't like (or understand) from those social problems that might, in fact, cause teenage alienation and criminal behavior. Banning Marilyn Manson, hip-hop clothes, and rap music will certainly have an effect, but not the desired one. And, finally, we need to remind ourselves that youth culture is something that modern society has invented and celebrated. By extending affluence to children, by giving them computers and spending money, by making them consumers and therefore members of the marketplace, we have given them access to an adult world and an adult culture. We will have to learn to live with the consequences of that.

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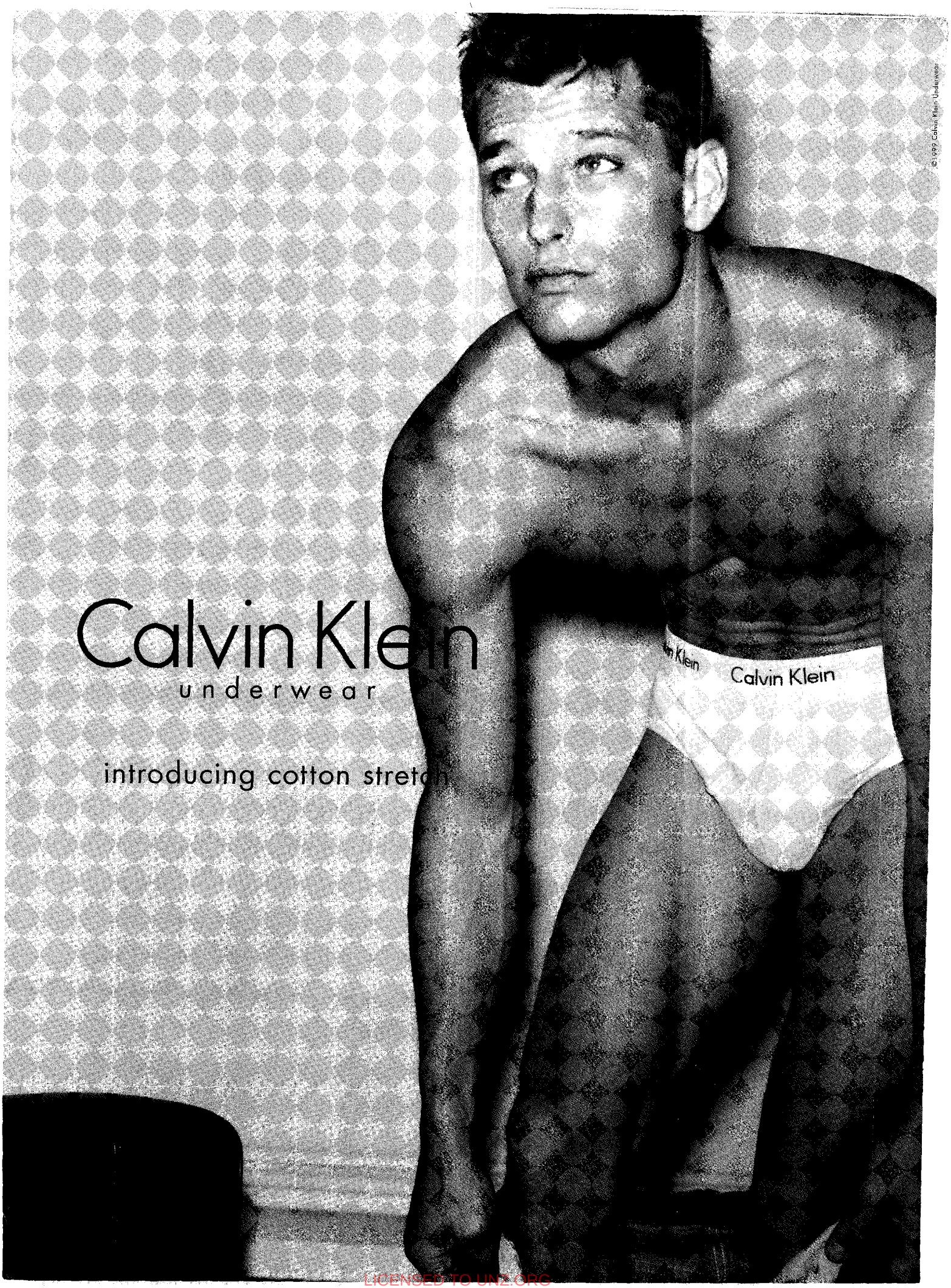

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